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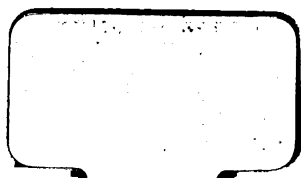
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38.

469.





THE
RIVER AND THE DESART.

VOL. I.



R. Munnick & Co. Lith. 22, Long Ave.

CONVENT OF THE GRANDE CHARTREUSE.

Published by Henry Colburn Great Marlborough Street 1836



THE RIVER
AND
THE DESART:
OR,
RECOLLECTIONS
OF
THE RHÔNE AND THE CHARTREUSE.

By MISS PARDOE,
AUTHOR OF "THE CITY OF THE SULTAN,"
&c. &c. &c.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
HENRY COLBURN, PUBLISHER,
GREAT MARLBOROUGH STREET.

1838.

469.

LONDON ;
Printed by Maurice and Co., Howford Buildings,
Fenchurch Street.

TO

Mrs. JOHN HEARNE,

WHO WILL BOTH UNDERSTAND AND

APPRECIATE THE OFFERING;

THESE LETTERS

ARE VERY AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED.

Bradenham Lodge, Feb. 1838.

P R E F A C E.

IN submitting the present work to the public, I must be permitted to offer a remark on the shape in which it is put forth ; and my reasons for not having given to it the advantage of a more author-like dress. It is precisely what it purports to be,—a Series of Letters, written to a valued Friend during my sojourn in the South of France ; thrown off at the instant, and on the spot.

It was not my intention to have obtruded this correspondence on the world ; but I have been induced to do so in deference to the judgment of one, of whose friendship I am proud, and for whose advice I am grateful. There is some

irrelevant matter in several of the letters, which I could have wished withdrawn; but the same fiat has decided me to leave every paragraph as it originally stood, obliterating only the names of individuals; and I was the more readily persuaded to this, that the heaviest blame which has hitherto been visited on my works, has been their "ornate and ambitious style."

In the present instance this defect cannot be supposed to exist; or, if it indeed should do so, I must e'en offer my apology in the words of Mascarille, in the "Précieuses Ridicules" of Molière:—

"Tout ce que je fais me vient naturellement, c'est sans étude."

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Convent of the Grande Chartreuse.

Frontispiece to Vol. I.

Entrance to the Port of Marseilles.

Frontispiece to Vol. II.

THE
RIVER AND THE DESART.

LETTER I.

The Steam-packet—Banks of the Thames—Fellow-passengers—Sea Nausea.

On board the Brochelbank, May 1835.

AT length we are parted ! At length, after long years of unreserved communion, we are reduced to the cold medium of the pen, in order to continue that interchange of affection and of feeling, which has been so long indulged as to have become an absolute want to both of us. Be it so: we shall only the more enjoy a renewal of our less restricted intercourse, when I once again return to the comforts of the home and the fire-side, which you have loved too well to abandon for the more precarious pleasures of a foreign sojourn.

You desire me to tell you *all*—not to conceal from you a circumstance, and scarcely a feeling ; and I obey you the more readily, that I shall thus be enabled, in whatever mood of mind, to throw my thoughts upon paper, unfettered by the cold formalities of more ceremonious correspondence.

Time and distance only render those who are truly loved, more dear and more valuable to the absent : the world may look cold on us, and strange ; the butterflies, who greeted us in the sunshine, may avoid us in the shade. True affection can afford to bear this ; it regards neither the world, nor its butterflies—it knows neither doubt nor misgiving. When all things are weighed by the balance of the heart in our daily intercourse with our kind, how many are found wanting ! Thank heaven, my dear ——, that you have stood the test of years, and that no cloud has ever rested on the fair landscape of our long friendship.

When we parted, you blamed my erratic propensities ; and you told me (how truly !) that none could love me more tenderly than those

from whom I was thus voluntarily about to separate. It was a truth too grateful for me to attempt its refutation, and yet it was my nature to sigh for a brighter sky, and a stranger scene, and I could not decide on foregoing this self-indulgence.

It is a singular impulse, this thirst for change—this love for the new and the untasted—this restlessness of spirit, which sends us forth as wanderers in a world, where one bright spot at least is ours, secured by the tenderness of others from sorrow, and suffering, and privation; but from which we turn, sated with security and comfort, to tempt danger and weariness, and, worse than all, the cold eye and the colder heart which have no part in us, nor we in them.

The English, it is said, are peculiarly *feræ naturæ* in this respect; their wings are never long furred, save by stern necessity; and not contented with being natives of the first country under heaven, they overrun every other, as though loco-motion were part and parcel of their being.

The idler travels to kill time,—the student to

turn over a new page in the great volume of nature,—the invalid in search of health,—the voluptuary to escape yet awhile longer from satiety,—a thousand causes tend to the same effect ; and thus post-horses, and (alas !) passports, are as essential to the mass as the air they breathe.

And which of these inducements was it, I hear you ask, which sent me forth from a home of peace and affection, for which the whole world could offer no equivalent ? I answer not the query : I am bound only to reveal the feelings and impulses which succeed my departure, not those by which it was preceded.

My passage from London to Calais was *triste* enough ; the pang of parting for an indefinite period from so many who were dear to me, still clung about my heart ; and yet I had not parted from all,—some were yet with me to whom I was bound by the strongest ties of affection—by grateful memories—by long-tried and never-failing tenderness ; but it is nevertheless certain, that we never feel the value of that which we possess, in the same degree as we regret that which we have lost.

What a little world is a steam-packet ! with its aristocracy, its mobocracy, and its half-busy, half-dreamy idleness. We left dear England bathed in the clear sunshine of a glorious spring morning ; the mighty Babylon had a voice in all her streets,—the hum of industry was loud on her highways,—her majestic river was a floating city, crowded with men and merchandise, and many a cheerful song swept over its broad bosom. Vessels of all dimensions, and almost of all nations, rode gracefully at anchor,—each an earnest of British prosperity, and the extent of British commerce ; while the murmur of strange tongues came on the breeze, and the dark eyes of strange lands flashed on us as we swept past the shipping, between the treasure-teeming banks.

After a time, I had leisure to look around upon the new companions with whom my erratic propensities had temporarily associated me. The deck of the Brockelbank was crowded ; but every five minutes the number of passengers was diminished by the departure of some individual, who had only been delaying for awhile the farewell which came at last too soon.

With what painful interest I watched each boat as it bore away its regretted freight ; and how sincerely I sympathized with the anxious watcher who hung over the vessel's side, to secure the last distant glimpse of the home-speeding voyager ! Many of these partings were tender, tearful, and prolonged even to pain ; while occasionally it was but the mere exuberance of two happy hearts, laughing over their temporary separation—each buoyant with some prospect of its own. How easy it was to distinguish between the idler, who was bound only to the opposite shore for a week or a month, and with whom the theme was rather his return than his departure ; and the traveller who, like myself, left for an uncertain period his home and his connexions, with their million associations and memories.

Mais à quoi bon, you will ask, all these depressing thoughts ? Truly, not much ; but it is far more easy to decide on quitting those who are dear to us, than to do it stoically.

A heavy storm of wind and rain drove us all below just as we were off Gravesend ; and it was amusing to remark how rapidly the ladies of the

party, when crushed together in the narrow cabin, were huddled into intimacy.

This was peculiarly perceptible among the French women, of whom there were several on board : one was evidently a pretty little *modiste*, whose new straw bonnet, dashing cloak, and bright-coloured muslin, kept her in a constant state of excitement and anxiety. She was dressed *de la tête aux pieds* in British manufacture ; and having left England under a spring sun, she had been more careful to make a *toilette contrabandiste*, and to disappoint *Messieurs les Douaniers*, than to provide against a possible change of weather. Another, after affecting for awhile *la grande dame*, for which Nature had certainly never designed her, and confining her conversation entirely to her husband, when driven below became absolutely loquacious ; and, to judge by the sudden friendship which she struck up with her smart little countrywoman, there seemed every probability of its enduring for a (French) eternity.

Monsieur le mari, I may as well remark *par parenthèse*, was quite inimitable : I made a sketch

of him ; I will give you another in words. He was a short, lean, eager-looking little man, with quick black eyes, a nose and chin most marvelously elongated, and a bushy head of black hair which would have produced an effect in a pantomime : imagine this head surmounted by a *casquette* of seal-skin with a large peak of black leather, and the slender person enveloped, for that is the proper term, in an ample, ill-cut coat of grey duffle, capacious enough to have enclosed a man of twice his size ; hanging to his heels, and furnished with immense pockets literally crammed, which, at every step that he took, swung against his legs with a violence that threatened to upset him.

Do you see the man ? If you do, it only remains for you to fancy *Madame l'épouse* apostrophizing this comical little object every five minutes as *Mon beau !* and *Mon cher petit papa !* kissing his hand ; and *faisant des yeux doux*, as though her Caliban had been Adonis, or Narcissus !

For the rest, we had a pretty but somewhat *passée* English woman, with a military-looking

husband, and a very ugly French maid ; to whom, by way of showing at once her exclusiveness and her good taste, she addressed the whole of her discourse ; two or three listless young men, who hung over the vessel's side, and speculated on the progress of the patches of sea-weed which floated by ; a couple of French youths, very loquacious, and *tant soit peu galliards* ; and an unfortunate lady, who became ill long before we left the river, and continued so until we reached Calais. These were the aristocrats of the company ; but the variety, the character, and the interest, were all " to the fore."

Sitting on a coil of rope, close to the stern of the vessel, I remarked a French officer, in his grey frock coat, military casquette, and laced pantaloons,—tall and slight, and melancholy-looking : he did not utter a word to any one ; it was easy to see that his poverty had been more potent than his pride, and that he was ill at ease in his present position. Near him stood a stout muscular man who had lost an arm, and who exhibited to the passengers an ill-executed representation of a wolf attacking two men ; while

he solicited alms from the charitable to enable him to reach his home without encroaching on a little hoard that he had amassed in England, where he had been exhibiting the original of the painting, which he had ultimately sold for the Zoological Gardens ; and which, according to his own account, he had succeeded in capturing, although not until it had destroyed thirteen individuals. The tale was, however, told in so business-like a drone, that we received it with considerable reservation.

Nor was this our only exhibition ; for a bluff, good-humoured, elderly man was on board, who had also been speculating on English liberality and gullibility, and who was returning to his country with a capital of twelve francs and a puppet-show. He was a perfect original ; of course he " had served," and equally of course, he extasiated on the Emperor, and shrugged his shoulders at all other crowned heads, past, present, and to come. He was a merry-hearted fellow ; and danced, sang, and fought his battles over again to any one who would listen, during the twelve hours that we were at sea.

Add to these a little grisette, who was a coquette of the first water ; and a rough weather-beaten English sailor, with his wife and daughter, who had, one and all, quite the air of persons to whom the transportation of "untaxed articles" was sufficiently familiar ; and you may fancy that the group was heterogeneous enough.

LETTER II.

Disembarkation—Custom-house at Midnight—The
Gates—A Vision of Home.

Calais.

MY letter, written on board the Brockelbank, was, my dear —, perhaps fortunately for you, suddenly cut short by intense suffering. In a moment the words danced before my eyes, the table appeared to be escaping through the cabin-windows, and I fairly gave up all effort at heroism in utter despair. Strange noises were in my ears, strange savours in my nostrils; my brain swam, my eye-balls burned, and I was prostrated, body and mind.

There is no sympathy so awkward as that which is educed by sea-sickness, and assuredly none which is less graciously received. After striving for some hours to console others, I was fain at length to yield to the enemy, and in my turn required consolation; which was, however,

only available in the form of soda-water, and a mattress.

The sea-nausea is a tenacious and unsparing enemy; for it asks not only endurance of suffering, but also that utter prostration, both mental and physical, which is more bitter than all pain. Worn out, at length, by my Protean adversary, I slept the deep sleep of exhaustion, from which I was only awakened on our arrival at Calais.

My friends were already upon deck, anxiously waiting for me, when I emerged from the little cabin, under the guidance of the very civil and attentive stewardess; and the novelty and excitement of the scene soon enabled me to fling off the uncomfortable remains of languor which yet clung to me; I say novelty, for I had never before landed any where in the night; and the scene was like the continuation of the dream from which I had been just awakened, rather than a reality.

The numerous lanterns flitting about the deck, as many a procrastinating passenger began, literally at "the eleventh hour," to search for the *sac de nuit*, the portmanteau, or the basket,

which was essential to his personal comfort during the night, and which the custom-house officers were to be bribed or bored into passing; the vociferous voices of the attendant waiters of the different hotels, already wrangling among themselves for the possession of the way-worn and the weary; the cold deep tones of the soldiery who guarded the barred-up passage from the vessel to the pier, through which the impatient strangers were only suffered to pass one or two at a time, as they declared the name of the hotel to which they were destined; while in the distance the long shadows of the tall buildings fell dark and long, saddening the bright moonlight; formed altogether a picture so perfectly un-English, that I involuntarily sought for my passport, and drew my breath hard, with the sensation of having bartered somewhat of my accustomed liberty for a foreign thrall.

We were among the first to quit the vessel, and having decided on continuing our journey the following day, we lost no time in despatching a messenger to the Bureau des Diligences; but even provident as we were, the *coupé* was

already taken, and we were fain to content ourselves with places in the *intérieur*. Having provided for our future accommodation, we very patiently followed Meurice's intelligent *commissionnaire* to the custom-house ; where, despite my fatigue, I could not refrain from laughing at the importance attached to the introduction into *la belle France* of a dozen weary, uncomfortable-looking people, half of whom, moreover, were females.

The scene was, nevertheless, not without its interest, and would have made an excellent picture : the outer guard-room, in which we were penned like so many sheep, was in comparative darkness, while that in which sat the examining officer, surrounded by half a dozen armed sentries, was lighted by a powerful lamp, that shed a broad glare upon the faces of the functionary, and the traveller whose identity was the subject of discussion, while it fell in a clear stream on the scattered papers strown on the table between them, and glistened over the accoutrements and bayonets of the soldiers.

We were not long detained ; and after I had

undergone the ceremony of being searched by an old woman, who was half-asleep, and from whom I purchased exemption for my little basket with a handful of sous, we once more set forth.

As we paid our franc to the yawning gate-keeper of Calais, I thought of Hogarth's clever but stinging picture; while he politely pocketed his fee; and at the same instant my thoughts were recalled from the past to the present by the true Gallic politeness of the *commissionnaire*, who, as our feet passed the threshold, withdrew his *casquette* with the air of a posture-masture, and welcomed us to Calais.

The grey dawn begins to glimmer through my casement; two hurried letters for England, half written in pencil on board the packet, half completed in ink since I landed, are lying sealed beside me: we are to leave Calais at seven o'clock, and I am yet lingering lovingly over the paper which is so soon to meet your beloved hand.

A strange, sad feeling of loneliness is stealing over me. My heart is at home, beside my own

happy hearth ; I can see the kind eye of my father,—the fond smile of my mother,—the calm, clear brow of the gentle friend, whose tenderness is to console them in the absence of their truant child. I can fancy the kind eye clouded, the fond smile saddened ; and the tears begin to fall upon the page over which I lean. I see all as though it were reflected in a mirror,—the books which on my departure I had displaced, still lying as I left them, because it was my hand that flung them there ; my favourite dog sleeping luxuriously upon the sofa, tranquil and unchidden, because it belongs to me, and loves me ; the last flowers which I gathered, suffered to remain, all withered though they be, unchanged—but enough of this. I look around me, and for the first time I feel that I am alone, at least in spirit.

You, I trust, are slumbering tranquilly. Good angels guard you ! Should I too sleep, I shall be with you in my dreams.

LETTER III.

Pascal's Aphorism—Thoughts on Egotism—Sentiment in Paris—Interior of a French Diligence—Travelling Flirtation—The Crippled Postillion of Montreuil—Human Ostrich—Madame C * * *, the accomplished author of "Chantilly"—M. Hugo—Popular Delusion with regard to Literary People.

Paris.

"*Voulez-vous qu'on dise du bien de vous ? n'en dites point ;*" is one of the aphorisms of the accomplished Blaise Pascal ; and never, perhaps, either before or since, have so much meaning, so much sense, so much knowledge of the world, and so much philosophy, been concentrated in the same number of words.

Are we not ever ready to smile or to sneer at the egotist, be his estimable qualities as palpable as they may ? And do we not deal out praise grudgingly, where we feel that we are merely the echo of another's sentiment ? Certain it is, that we are always more reluctant to yield to a

claim than to confer a benefit ; and although egotism must be allowed to be the least mischievous of vices, inasmuch as unlike most other sins (for it is decidedly a social sin,) all its evil consequences centre in its author, it is nevertheless certain that it meets with less toleration in the world, than many which entail alike wrong and dishonour by their indulgence.

We are never lenient to any foible that wounds our own self-love, and every one unconsciously looks upon the egotism of his neighbour as a personal injury ; when, therefore, the ill-judged prattle of self-love deepens into self-praise, little sympathy indeed can be expected from the listener ; and I have been led into this long digression merely to beg of you to remember, that, compelled as I am necessarily to make more use of the *meum* than the *tuum*, I must not be confounded with the egotists of Pascal, *qui disent du bien d'eux mêmes*.

Here then I am at Paris—actually moralizing in the most gay-hearted capital of Europe ; and why not ? Of Paris I can say nothing with which you are not already as familiar as with

your breviary, while to myself all is like the renewal of a long-passed dream. It is really strange, when I remember how perfect a child I was when last here, how every object already seems familiar to me.

But you will, perhaps, desire to hear something of my journey from Calais; and although you know every league of the road, and that consequently all local description would be supererogatory, yet, as the world is like a huge kaleidoscope, taking fresh colours and fresh forms every instant; although I cannot show you new places, I may at least show you new persons; and I am not quite sure, despite the temporary inconvenience, and the increased fatigue of travelling two days and a night with five companions instead of a couple, that the journey was not much less wearying; inasmuch as the incongruous particles thus jostled by circumstances into one still more incomposite whole, were, in the aggregate, sufficiently amusing.

Imagine, then, your faithful correspondent and her friends, who will require no description; and then picture to yourself a rather pretty,

somewhat affected, very coquettish little English woman ; the *vis-à-vis* being her female friend, and a gentleman, also of her party, who was ringed, chained, and embroidered so gorgeously, that I was involuntarily reminded of the amusing Irish baronet in Lady Morgan's " Princess ;" whose ideas of personal dignity were so intimately interwoven with his " best baby-linen-warehouse shirt." The gentleman in question appeared no less sensibly impressed of the value of a *toilette recherchée*, although he had lacked the taste to secure it ; and I know not with which he flirted the most, his own complicated finery, or the languishing little lady opposite to him..

I soon discovered that my very voluble countryman was travelling from Calais to Boulogne, in the ostensible character of suitor to the plain and taciturn friend of the little coquette, whom I was somewhat surprised to find was a married woman, and moreover accompanied by her husband, who travelled, *faute de place*, in the *rotonde* ; being, I imagine, too polite to the Lothario, whom we had the happiness of possessing

as a temporary companion, to separate him from his mistress.

Be this as it might, it is certain that while the wife and the friend conversed together; while he nursed alternately her basket and her bonnet, murmured a few remarks *sotto voce*, for which he was repaid with a blush or a smile; and, in short, bestowed upon her all the attention which he could spare from himself, the young lady in the corner very quietly went to sleep; and on awaking drew a French vocabulary from her capacious reticule, and studied most intently, suffering very little interruption from her companions.

Before we got to Boulogne, they had examined each other's rings, and given the history of each, save one, on which the gentleman thought proper to be mysterious and sentimental; whereat the lady pouted for some five minutes, and only recovered her good-humour after an effort.

At Boulogne, the husband made his appearance at the window of the diligence, to take leave of his wife and her friend, who were going to Paris on a visit; and to assist the lover to

alight ; he (the husband) was a very fine-looking young man, and during the whole time that we were changing horses, he never ceased his entreaties that his *cara sposa* would be careful of herself during their separation ; while, with all the *abandon* of genuine and deep feeling, he addressed her by every tender epithet (and they are not few !) of which the French language is susceptible.

The lady in the corner laid aside her book, and submitted with great philosophy to a few jests from the anxious husband on the subject of the smiling cavalier, who also lingered in his adieux ; and when we ultimately drove off, the *wife* burst into an agony of tears, while the *mistress*, indulging in a most luxurious yawn, very unsentimentally ejaculated, “ Thank goodness, we’re off at last ! how I detest Boulogne ! ”

I know not if you remember the crippled postillion of Montreuil,—it is certain that I did not ; and when I saw him running beside the diligence, cracking his long whip,—his red cap and sash, and cavalry boots gleaming out in the sunshine—I could not imagine of what utility so

noisy an attendant was likely to prove ; when just outside the walls of the town, he sprang upon the step of the carriage, and thrust in at the window a roll of dirty paper, of the dimensions of a truncheon. As we all declined unfurling the antiquated and unsavoury missive, he next introduced the stump of his right arm, swaying it up and down in a most revolting manner ; while in a dry and abrupt tone, as unlike as possible to the usual drawl of a mendicant, he informed us that he had been thus crippled by the overturn of a diligence, and that consequently he looked to the liberality of travellers for his support. It was in vain that he was requested to withdraw his arm from the window ; he set our entreaties fairly at defiance, nor did he cease to persecute us until we reached the barrier.

At Montreuil we unfortunately found a substitute for the Boulogne Lothario, whose place had hitherto remained vacant, in the person of a very stout, very taciturn, and very sour-looking man ; who, not content with alighting at every post to eat or to drink, had his pockets

filled with edibles, varying from cold *bouilli* to lump sugar; all of which he seemed equally to enjoy as they presented themselves.

He was, in short, a species of human zophite, mindless and mannerless; in striking contrast from the generality of his countrymen, who are by far the most agreeable travelling companions, in the aggregate, with whom I have ever met. A Frenchman *en voyage*, is usually quite divested of all consideration of self when he travels with ladies, and his politeness and attention do not slumber for a moment; but the individual of few words and mighty mastication whom I am describing, was of another stamp: and did not by any means uphold the character of his countrymen.

I spent my first day in Paris in my own room, after the fatigue of my journey, writing letters to England; and, in a kind of luxurious semi-slumber, thinking—almost, indeed I may say, *dreaming* of home, and the dear indwellers there. I devoted the following three mornings to making visits; and on the fourth, I had the happiness to receive my amiable and accom-

plished friend Mde. C——, the talented author of “Chantilly.” How tenfold welcome is the first familiar face which greets us among strangers, even although it should be that of an indifferent individual! You may therefore judge of my delight on receiving my earliest *bien venu* from one, whom it is only necessary to know, to love as much for her amiable qualities, as to admire for the talent which enhances their value.

To this lady, and to her no less accomplished husband, I am indebted for the brightest, as well as for the happiest moments that I have yet spent in Paris; although I would not by any means imply that I have either forgotten or undervalued the kind attention which I have experienced from many others; but when you remember the personal qualities of Mde. C——, our previous acquaintance, and the fact that she is, as well as myself, one of the *genus irritabile vatium*, you will not marvel that it should have been as I describe.

I left England with the hope that I should effect an acquaintance with M. Hugo: you know how anxious I was to see and converse

with him, how ardently I admire the originality and power of his genius, and how much I worship talent. As yet I have failed; but as the failure has originated in my own arrangements, I trust ere long to be more fortunate.

I was much amused by the assurance of a French gentleman, with whom I was conversing yesterday on the subject, that I should be disappointed when I *did* meet him. I asked, "Why?" and was answered with great *naïveté*, "Because he is not handsome, and his manners are not *distinguées*."

It is thus that the crowd look upon literary people. They do not search for the hidden glories of the mighty mind,—they do not seek to grapple with the lofty aspirations, and to bow down before the gifted impulses of genius; but they expect to meet in every author the Phœbus or the Glaucus of his own creation; and when they sometimes (indeed *generally*) fail, they visit the disappointment of their own shallow folly upon the idol of their previous worship; and, like the unthinking traveller who shudders at the sterility of the rock that rises

bleak and bare before his path, heedless or unsuspicious of the jewels which are buried in its bosom ; they overlook the majesty of mind in the irregularity of feature, and turn away with an expression of wonder and annoyance on discovering that Socrates was not cast in the same mould as Apollo.

But I digress : and as the extreme length of my letter warns me to conclude, I cannot do so better than by the assurance that

I am,

Entirely yours.

LETTER IV.

Singular Will of Lord C——, *Chiffoniers* of Paris—Visit to *La Morgue*—High Mass at Nôtre Dame—M. le Chevalier—Mrs. Trollope—Church of Ste. Etienne du Mont—Departure from Paris.

Paris, June.

ALL the English here are in a state of excitement at the decease, or rather at the singular will of Lord C——, who died a day or two ago : and who has left two millions of francs, and his fine and valuable estates in this country, to his *valet-de-chambre*. Truly it is a strange world ! But this fortunate domestic is not the first who, after brushing his master's shoes, has had the good fortune to stand in them.

How much amused I have been, when loitering at my window in the twilight, by watching the *chiffoniers*, with their parchment lanterns and their long wands, headed by small hooks, with which they dexterously and rapidly transfer to

the baskets that they carry on their backs, the rags and other rubbish flung into the streets by the inhabitants. The extreme velocity with which they pass along, pausing only at the little heaps whence they withdraw their treasures, gives their flitting lights a very singular appearance.

They are in such numbers, and, it is to be supposed, find their employment so profitable, probably from occasionally picking up some articles for which they are indebted to accident rather than design; that when, on one occasion, the Prefect of Police decided on having the garbage removed from the streets by carts appointed for the purpose, and before nightfall, in order to put an end to the *chiffoniers* altogether, they rose in such a body as to cause an *émeute* in the city; and the more legitimate design of the authorities was necessarily abandoned.

As I could not see M. Hugo, I made a pilgrimage to the scene of two of his works: first I visited "*La Morgue*," having selected a day when there were no bodies exposed; but with this establishment I must confess that I was greatly disappointed. I had prepared

myself for a "sensation;" I expected at least to enter the receiving-house of wretchedness and crime by an obscure passage; to have time, after I left the carriage, to fit my mind to the miserable associations of the place,—in short, to indulge the morbid feelings to which one clings so unaccountably at similar moments.

But no such facilities for sentiment are to be found at *La Morgue*. You pass at once from the street into a small, square apartment, white-washed and well-lighted; having on one side an open grating, behind which are three broad planks, supported by trestles, each forming an inclined plane, in order that the countenance of the corpse should be fully exposed; while along the wall, the garments in which the unhappy victims of murder or suicide were clad on their reception, are exhibited for the purpose of identification. The apartment, or cell, is scrupulously clean, and even cheerful; and it is impossible to imagine an establishment of so melancholy, and indeed awful a description as *La Morgue*, more thoroughly divested of gloom. Thence we progressed to *Nôtre Dame*, and there the frightfully-lofty gallery, whence Quasi-

modo is fabled to have hurled the wily Claude Frollo, was pointed out to me ; and after having stood for awhile, lost in admiration of this noble relique of ancient architecture, with its elaborately-ornamented and stately portals, and its costly oriel window, we entered the cathedral to hear the high mass, which was to be served by the archbishop with "the pomp and circumstance" of the most gorgeous of all religions; the day of our visit being a solemn fête of the Romish church.

There are, perhaps, few things more striking in a Catholic country, than the abrupt transition from the squalid poverty and importunate wretchedness of the miserable mendicants who throng the porches of the churches, to the gorgeous and lavish magnificence to which you are introduced by the simple opening of a door ; and this is particularly palpable at Paris, where the highly-decorated shrines look as though, from their very costliness, they must be unapproachable to such lost and filthy beings as those who crowd and importune the pious and the curious in their immediate vicinity.

Of the ceremony of the mass it is needless to say any thing: the procession was a galaxy of jewels, and gold, and silver, gleaming out amid the flashing of wax-lights and snow-white garments. The archbishop is a remarkably fine man, and looks as though he had been born to the mitre and crosier; but to me the effect of the entire ceremony was utterly marred, by the barbarous taste, which, instead of trusting the harmony of the service to the fine organ and the deep voices of the priests, introduced in the tribune a score of violins and violoncellos, which increased the noise, while they detracted from the effect, of some very exquisite compositions.

A day or two ago, I accompanied Mde. C—— to pay a visit to M. le Chevalier, the learned and venerable librarian of St. Geneviève. I cannot describe to you how much I was delighted with the amiable and interesting old man; with the charming absence of pretension, the (I had almost said) simplicity, with which he uttered the most profound and philosophical remarks; and the youthfulness of mind with which he seemed to rise superior to the infirmi-

ties of body, which, in his eighty-third year, are thickening fast upon him.

As he sat before me in his ample and well-cushioned arm-chair, leaning upon his crutch-stick, and smiling amid his grey hairs at the graceful gambols of Mde. C——'s lovely little girl; and as I remembered that he was a man of profound erudition, whose fame had extended through many lands; and whose genius, discursive as it was profound, had shed its light afar off; I was lost in admiration of the gentle and beautiful nature which had preserved the philosopher, the painter, and the poet, from every taint of that odious mannerism, and evident self-appreciation, which so frequently disguise, like an ill-conceived mask, the radiant features of talent; and, to speak fancifully, destroy the purple glow on the wings of genius.

With M. le Chevalier *self* seemed forgotten; while every minute interest of his guests appeared to claim alike his sympathy and his attention. To Mde. C——, to whom he is intimately known, and evidently much attached, he spoke with the earnestness and affection of a

parent; to myself with all the kindness and consideration which such an introduction and his own generous nature dictated. He entered largely into my intended plans, honoured me with advice, and smiled at my enthusiasm.

As we made our visit at an hour when the library was closed, we declined his offer of the key, which would have entailed upon his respectable-looking old housekeeper the trouble of becoming our *cicerone*; all the persons employed in the establishment having retired to their homes, and M. le Chevalier himself being too infirm to undertake so laborious an office; while we accepted, with many and sincere thanks, his earnest invitation for some future day.

Before we left him, having ascertained that we were acquainted with Mrs. Trollope, and were about to visit her, he begged us to present his apologies to that lady, for not having received her when she had called on him a few days previously; stating that, from his age, and the consequently precarious state of his health, he was unequal to the exertion of entertaining the numerous strangers who visited him.

He inquired eagerly into the state of politics in England, where, he told me, he had resided years ago; and with the intuitive politeness of a superior mind he added, that it was a country which he had never forgotten, and had always loved. I know not from which I parted the most reluctantly,—from the profound philosopher and accomplished scholar, or from the gentle and generous old man. Should he unfortunately have “fallen asleep” before my return to Paris, I shall always venerate his memory.

From the apartments of M. le Chevalier we passed into the venerable church of St. Etienne du Mont, where there are three or four good pictures,—the records of half a dozen notable miracles performed by the saint,—and some highly-ornamented shrines; and thence we rattled over the ill-paved streets to the residence of Mrs. Trollope.

We found the celebrated chronicler of American manners surrounded by books, pamphlets, and luncheon; meditating her departure on a pilgrimage to the pictured shrines of the Low Countries; and after having discussed the last

news from England, and the latest in Paris, we made our parting compliments, and sped to the royal shades of St. Cloud.

With these exceptions, I have seen, and on this occasion shall see, no one ; for we have received a letter which has decided us to leave Paris to-morrow morning for Lyons. The weather is intensely hot ; but, at this season, procrastination would but increase the evil. In a few short hours I shall be again speeding upon my way, and leaving yet further behind me all to whom I am dear.

I have received a card from Mde. la Duchesse de B——, the accomplished daughter of Mde. de Staël ; but even the temptation of spending an evening in the most brilliant *salon* of Paris, shall not turn me from my purpose.

Once more farewell ! you must no longer associate my memory with the storied terraces of the Thuilleries, nor the brazen glories of the Place Vendôme, from whose lofty column Napoleon once more looks down in triumph on the good city of Paris,—(when I was last here “ his place knew him not.”) My next letter will be

dated from the city of silks and velvets—*la seconde ville du royaume*. Until it greets you, let this assure you of my unabated and unabatable attachment.

I shall look earnestly for news from England. I do not mean the intelligence which I can glean (however tardily) from the minute sheet of Galignani; but that “journal of the heart,” which can alone satisfy the absent.

LETTER V.

Two Days at Lyons—"Lions" of the City—Country between Paris and Lyons—Mont Tarare—Bonapartist Ballad—Lyonese Hotel—The Idiot Son—Departure from Lyons.

Lyons, June.

STILL no news from England ! Let not any one whose heart lingers at home, quit his country during the London season. The dissipation of the night induces that *dolce far niente* by day, which makes all, even the kindest and the truest of friends, most defective correspondents. But had you once surmised how much the fatigue of my journey from Paris was to cost me ; or the wretched reception which I should meet with in the ancient city of Lyons ; I am quite sure that, despite balls and *soirées*, you would nevertheless have contrived that a letter should greet me on my arrival here, to be at once the test of your affection, and the solace of my sickness.

Yes, sickness ; for I have been so thoroughly prostrated by my unwonted exertion, that I have actually spent two days here without once leaving my apartment ; and yet we have resolved to pursue our journey to-morrow morning.

My friends have wandered about the city, it is true ; but from them I have gained little information, as their account was crude enough.

“ There is a fine library here, I find, containing about 100,000 volumes ;” said —— yesterday.

“ How delightful ! Were you not excessively gratified ?”

“ With what ?”

“ With the library, of course.”

“ Of what use would it have been to me to look at books which I could not read ?”

“ But the old writers—think what a collection of classical authors.”

“ I cut the classics when I left Cambridge ;” said ——.

“ Have you, then, seen nothing during your perambulations ?”

“ Yes, there is a theatre ; and a fine old

church ; a court of law, an hospital, a college, and an equestrian statue of Louis XIV. ; and an Hôtel de Ville, decorated with two colossal figures in bronze, representing the Rhône and the Saône ; and a waiter, who spoke English at the *Restaurant* where I lunched, told me that the city was founded in the year 43 of the Christian era ; and was burnt down in the reign of Nero."

Here I began to laugh ; and seeing that this unusual effort of volubility had somewhat exhausted my habitually taciturn companion, I pursued the subject in the same tone : " Some opulent Italian emigrants took refuge here in the twelfth century, and introduced the arts into the city. The Genevese established the first silk manufactory in the reign of Francis I.," &c., &c.

" How provoking you are !" exclaimed — ; " why trouble me, if you knew all this, to go out to collect information ?"

" My good sir," I replied, much amused at his annoyance ; " I did not ask you for local statistics ; for I had heard of the ancient city of Lyons, though I had not seen it. But even had it been otherwise, you may remember that

I purchased at Paris a *programme itinéraire*, wherein all these interesting particulars are duly detailed."

— is so annoyed at the laughter of Mrs. — and myself, that I doubt whether he will ever go forth on a voyage of discovery for us again.

It strikes me, that modern travellers have never done justice to the beauty of the country between Paris and Lyons, and the reason is obvious: the ground is as much trodden as that between London and York, and is consequently passed over as indifferently. And yet how rife with memories are Fontainebleau and Moulins! how finely situated are Nemours, Cosne, and Nevers! how magnificent is Tarare! how picturesque is l'Arbresle, with its vast and feudal ruins! and how proudly is Lyons itself seated along the bank of the noble river which makes so striking a feature in the landscape!

With the ascent of the Tarare mountain we were enchanted: the whole scene is stupendous; and we saw it at a moment that a painter would have loved. One of those storm-clouds which weep themselves away in rain so fre-

quently in the summer months, and are such fine accessories to mountain scenery, overtook us about half-way up ; and produced transitions of light and shade perfectly beautiful,—the dense masses of forest timber,—the huge fragments of rock scattered at intervals among them, as though flung there by the hands of giants,—slender but impetuous torrents leaping, and rushing, and roaring into the very depths of the valley,—with here and there, under some shelving ledge, the rude hut of a goat-herd ; and near to it a small patch of land, redeemed from the sterility around, and bright with the springing corn ; while above, the driving clouds flew rapidly along, darkening only for a brief instant the objects over which they passed, and which, even while the eye rested on them, sparkled again beneath the sunshine, glistening with the transient shower :—all these things produced an effect which I shall not easily forget.

Thanks to that greatest of road-makers, Napoleon, the ascent is neither difficult nor dangerous ; and the fact, that he caused the present admirable approach to be constructed in conse-

quence of the death of one of his favourite generals, who lost his life by the overturn of his carriage about midway up the mountain, makes this noble work as interesting as it is useful.

Singularly enough, both my companions fell asleep during the shower, and were only awakened when the postillion commenced singing a Bonapartist ballad, in a stentorian voice that made the mountain fling back a reply, and which lasted during nearly the whole of the descent. It was a wild, bold melody, by no means inappropriate to the scene; and I suspect that he had already been told so, for when it at length terminated, he looked back confidently for applause.

From l'Arbresle to Lyons I followed the example of my companions, and slept; nor, when you consider that this was our third day *en route*, will you marvel that the example should prove contagious.

We reached Lyons between eight and nine in the evening; when, being all strangers in the land, we committed ourselves to the guidance of the most promising-looking *commissionaire*

who presented himself, and were forthwith conducted to the Hôtel des Etats Unis, in the Grande Rue de Paisy.

Should you ever visit Lyons, be warned by our miserable example, and avoid this establishment, if you wish for either comfort or cleanliness. It was too late, and we were also too much fatigued on our arrival to be fastidious, or indeed to have the opportunity of being so; and it was consequently not until the following morning that we were aware of the wretched accommodations of the house,—a discovery rendered still more annoying by the fact of my indisposition, which compelled me to bear, with what patience I might, a discomfort from which I had not energy to escape.

My friends could at least walk for awhile, and thus breathe a wholesome atmosphere; but I was a prisoner, without a book, (for I had exhausted my travelling library by the way); and without other occupation, (for to every thing like exertion I was entirely unequal,) than that of gazing from my window upon the prospect which it afforded; and of that you shall now judge.

Fancy a narrow street—so narrow, indeed, that two carriages cannot pass ; with houses seven stories high. Next, fancy Mrs. — and myself, *au deuxième* ; with, immediately beneath us, and on the ground-floor, a cooper, who commences his noisy avocation at four in the morning, and continues it most industriously and unremittingly until ten at night : add to this, a vast kennel in the centre of the street, an intercurrent as sluggish, as muddy, and as redolent of perfume as you can well imagine.

The tenement immediately opposite to us is a *café*, on the ground-floor of which the landlord keeps a piping bullfinch ; the *entresol* being occupied by a pretty little *couterière*, who works from daybreak to sunset : the *première* is vacant, and the unopened windows are curtained with cobwebs ; the *deuxième* is tenanted by a huge, unwieldy, shapeless elderly dame, who seems to have come into the world for no other purpose than to cook, to eat, and to caress a dark-eyed, vacant-looking man of twenty-three or four years of age ; whom I have had leisure to discover. is at once her son, and an idiot.

Their life is an extraordinary one: they commence eating at eight o'clock in the morning, with a vegetable soup; at eleven they devour fruit, which they obtain by lowering a small basket into the street with a string, in which the purchase-money descends, and the purchase ascends; at one they dine; at four they take wine and cream-cheese, which they eat with a quantity of powdered loaf-sugar; and at seven in the evening they make their crowning repast.

All is washed, and cooked, and eaten in the same apartment, except the supper, at which they receive company; and the enormous and scantily-clad dame only pauses in her round of culinary preparation and masticatory enjoyment, to sit for awhile with her idiot son on his knees before her, his arms twined about her neck, and his sun-burnt and healthy-looking cheek pressed close to hers. The first day I observed them, and remarked the heat, the confusion, and the disorder in which they lived, I considered them objects of pity: but I have since changed my mind; for when I understood the helplessness of the one, and the devotion of

the other, I felt that they needed no commiseration while each was sufficient to the other's happiness.

I have watched them for hours with a painful pleasure that I will not attempt to describe. The poor youth was so docile, so loving, and murmured out his few mindless sentences in a tone so unutterably fond ; that I could not help reflecting how much happier was this afflicted mother, even under this severe dispensation, than many a prouder parent, to whom her child's mind was left, while his heart was wanting !

Yes, I verily believe, that could the dull horny eye of her boy be lighted up with reason, and his slumbering intellects awakened into life, while by the same process a chill should come over his warm heart, and a worldly selfishness replace his mindless but perfect love ; however the crowd might blame, she would yet rather hold him to her heart,—an idiot. What wit could compensate to the mother's clinging tenderness for that beautiful devotion, that unbounded trust ?——But enough of this.

Look upward to the next story : it is in the occupation of a gallant officer of dragoons,—a dark, sparkling, rather handsome man, who, for my misery, keeps in a cage on his balcony the shrillest-toned of all thrushes ; while at the casement above, (from whence, when occasionally *M. le militaire* stands at the window, coquetting with his noisy favourite, showers of rose-leaves are flung by the pretty but *passée* fair-one who tenants the chamber,) an ill-omened canary, who was decidedly hatched to make a noise in the world, has, I really believe, entered into a sort of unholy alliance with the bullfinch of the *café*, and the thrush of the *capitaine*, against any thing like peace ; for one or the other gives voice continually, and not unfrequently all three together !

To you, who are well acquainted with my habits, I need not, after thus expatiating on the accommodations (?) of the Hôtel des Etats-Unis, explain our reasons for resolving at once to risk the additional fatigue of reaching Marseilles. *There* I shall have time and opportunity, amid

the comforts of an English home, to recruit both my strength and spirits.

—— has just returned from the *Bureau des Diligences* ; Mrs. —— and I are to share the *coupé* of the Marseilles conveyance with a young French widow ; while poor —— himself will be once more compelled to encounter the horrors of the *intérieur*. We are to start at seven o'clock to-morrow morning, and I am writing to you on the very verge of midnight ; but I do not dread the hour of departure,—another day here would kill me !

You see the infliction which my untoward indisposition has brought upon you. Was there ever so unwieldy a letter ! *Mais que faire ?* during an imprisonment of three weary days, in which I have only had my memories to live upon. At last, however, you are released.

I go to dream of you.

Farewell.

LETTER VI.

Fine Country—Romance and Reality—The Widow—
The Ruined Tower—Pascal—Approach to Vienne—
Ruined Fortress—Convent of St. Maurice—Ancient
Cathedral—Antiquity of the City—Antique Tombs—
Curious Coins — Roman Remains — Vicissitudes—
Tomb of Pilate—The Square House—Local Curiosities—
Situation of Vienne—Napoleon's Fountains—
Antiquarian Priest.

Valence.

OVER what a heaven-impressed country have we travelled hence from Lyons! Now along the bank of the majestic Rhône—now parted from it only by vineyards and olive groves—now moving under the deep shadow of some stupendous rock, crowned with the mouldering ruin of what was once a place of pride and power; the wreck of a feudal castle—now in the full blaze of a southern sun, without a limit to the rich and far-spreading landscape. Fatigue, suffering, what were they? for a time, at least, medicined into oblivion.

You know what an idolater I have ever been of Nature. Had you been beside me, I should have had nothing left to desire : as it was, however, Mrs. ——— laughed, as usual, at my ecstasies; while our new travelling companion smothered a yawn with a smile, and said quietly, “ *Ah ! mais, Madame, je suis charmée que vous trouvez notre pays assez joli.*”

We were just then passing beneath the long dark shadows of a magnificent ruin, and I actually writhed under the adjective.

The lady in question was young, amiable, and extremely plain ; she had been to Lyons on a visit to her family for the first time since her widowhood, and was now returning to her own residence at Toulon. She was, moreover, very somnolent, very taciturn, and *tant soit peu bornée*.

As I found that she had frequently travelled over the same road, I naturally anticipated satisfactory replies to the few questions with which, in her waking intervals, I was tempted to trouble her : but my self-gratulation endured not long ; for chancing, near the pretty village

of Bregnaïs, to espy in the distance the remains of a tower, evidently of great antiquity; and not doubting for an instant that she could satisfy my curiosity, I ventured to ask her what might be the ruin on the hill, and whether there were any history attached to it: "*Ha!*" she exclaimed, "*c'est de la ruine la-bas que Madame veut parler? Mais, Madame, ne sait-elle pas que c'est un tour?*" After this, I of course troubled her no more.

When we at length reached the foot of the tower in question, I found that it had once appertained to a fortress of considerable extent; it was now converted into a *guinguette*, ("to what base uses may we come at last!") and the gardens and bowling-green were formed along the ancient ramparts; while over the door of entrance, whose fine deep Saxon arch yet retained a look of massive grandeur which not even its modern appendage had power to destroy, a large board set forth, that *à l'ancien tour on tient bon vin, bonne bière, café, et liqueurs*.

Some may think that the change of purpose to which this remnant of the feudal ages was

now condemned, was preferable to its original intention : for my own part, had I been the owner of the land, I would rather have pulled it down altogether. Fancy the watch-tower, from whose summit the warder had looked forth in the pride of strength ; and within whose massy walls the brave and the high-hearted had sat feasting in their harness, or laid sleeping, each with his weapon at his side ; converted into a drinking-booth for brawling peasants and inebriated boors ! But I have done ; or you will think that I shall never get beyond the ruined tower of Bregnaïs.

What, after the rapture of which I have just been guilty, shall I say to you of the little town of Vienne ? one of the most ancient, if not actually *the* most ancient city of France.

Pascal says, "*Les fleuves sont des routes qui marchent.*" The idea is quaint enough ; and it recurred to me on the approach to Vienne, as the ripple of the Rhône, beside whose broad stream we were progressing, ran shimmering and sparkling in the sunlight, bound on the same course.

On our left hand stretched along the chain of dark and sterile rocks which anciently shut in the river, but from whose base it has now considerably receded; the highest point being crowned, as is commonly the case in this part of the country, with a hoary mass of time-worn towers. The appearance of the ruin in question is peculiarly interesting; the keep still remains, and a great portion of the arch of the principal entrance; the acclivity is nearly perpendicular on all sides; and the great marvel is, how the hewn stone of which the castle has been composed, was ever transported to the summit of so bold and almost unapproachable a height: the walls are of considerable extent, and eminently picturesque.

Almost at the foot of this rock, seated in a vineyard, in striking contrast both of purpose and position with its once warlike neighbour, stands a handsome building, recently purchased by the nuns of St. Maurice as a convent; whither they are about to remove from that which they at present occupy in a close and dirty street of the city.

They have made a glorious choice ! The castle-crowned rock lowers on them from behind, like the genius of spent power looking down gloomily on the quiet haven of present peace,—vines and olives smile even at their very portal ; while beneath them laughs the Rhône, the broad and bounding Rhône, the mirror of as blue a sky as ever shone in the eye of beauty ; the whole landscape set in a frame of mighty and majestic mountains, looming darkly out on the horizon !

Long ere we entered the city, we saw the tall towers of the ancient cathedral dedicated to St. Maurice. It is considered to be one of the finest gothic edifices in France ; the *façade* is similar to that of St. Etienne du Mont at Paris ; the principal entrance is richly ornamented with sculpture, and is approached by a noble flight of stone steps, forming a spacious platform, whence we had a fine view of the river.

The interior of the church is rendered interesting, not only by its antiquity,—though Vienne was the cradle of Christianity in France, and her archbishops bore the title of Primates of Gaul ; while the city partook largely of the miseries

brought upon the country by the religious wars of the sixteenth century,—but also by its forty-eight lofty columns of rare marble, of which, however, a great portion of the effect is marred by the excessive taste for tawdry ornament, so prevalent in the religious edifices of Catholic countries; a taste that has clothed these finely proportioned pillars in crimson velvet for two-thirds of their height; while the numerous altars are laden with gold-leaf, foil, and discoloured lace. The galleries are very handsome, being decorated with gothic balustrades; and the mausoleum of Cardinal Montmorin, who was archbishop of Vienne in 1723, is well worthy of notice; as is also that of the bishop-elected king, Bozon.

The Sacristan pointed out to us two white marble sarcophagi, recently disinterred in digging the foundation of a house. The spot where they were found proved to be a burial-vault of some extent, but its date has not yet been ascertained. They are both elaborately lettered, but otherwise entirely destitute of ornament. The inscriptions, covering nearly

their whole surface, are in old monkish Latin ; but as our time was limited, and we had yet several interesting objects to visit in the city, we made no attempt to decipher them.

From a very intelligent woman, with whom we made acquaintance during our survey, we learnt that a collection of coins had been dug up the preceding day near the base of the rock, immediately at the entrance of the fort, by a labourer ; who had disposed of them, to our great regret, to a traveller who chanced to be on the spot.

The original extent of the city may yet be traced : it is now considerably diminished. Founded and inhabited by the Allobroges, it became the principal town of a Roman province, and boasted a senate-house. The ruins of three forts still exist,—Salomon, Pipet, and La Bâtie ; they are all Roman works, and are the most perfect of those which yet remain. In the fifth century, Vienne was the capital of the first kingdom of the Bourguignons. The grasp of France fastened upon her, however, in the next ; and in 534 she fell under the rule of the

French bishops, by one of whose councils Bozon was named King of Vienne. Again it became the capital of the second kingdom of Burgundy ; and in 871 supported a siege of several months, ere it yielded to the arms of Charles the Bald. After several other vicissitudes, it became reunited to the crown ; and will ever be famous for the council which, in its senate-house, decreed the abolition of the order of the Templars.

In a field near the town stands a monument, known by the name of the Tomb of Pilate. This curious remain is in better preservation than any other in the neighbourhood. It is upwards of forty feet in height ; and is a perfect square, surmounted by an open arcade, surrounded by columns, which in their turn support a quadrangular pyramid. It is on the right hand as you approach the city, about midway between the road and the river.

The " Square House," another of the local lions, is infinitely more ruinous, but has been extremely elegant. It is an oblong building, surrounded by slender columns of great beauty, which are now united by a modern wall. It was

originally a temple dedicated to Augustus and Livius, but has since successively served as a church, a club-room, and a tribunal of commerce; and is now converted into a museum of antiquities.

Vienne also boasts the remains of an aqueduct, the massive ruins of a bridge over the Rhône, the mouldering arch of an elegantly formed gate, and the scarcely-definite remnants of an amphitheatre. Its library contains, as we were informed, nearly 14,000 rare volumes; and the situation of the city is as beautiful, as its history is interesting.

It is built amphitheatrically on the declivity of a hill; and while one portion of the town stretches along the bank of the river, the other is nestled in the narrow valley of the Gère, and scattered over the steep descent which shuts it in. The lower town, which is traversed by the high road, is very superior to the upper, although the latter is much more ancient and picturesque.

The suspension-bridge across the Rhône is very elegant; and a handsome barrack, and an extensive and well-planted public-walk, have

lately been formed on the scite of the southern rampart.

The memory of Napoleon is revered in Vienne; the town having formerly suffered severely from a scarcity of water, and the inhabitants being indebted to him for the erection of several fountains in the most public thoroughfares; which are supplied by artificial means, and at a vast expense of labour, from the very heart of the rock, whence the stream flows into the basins as clear and as cold as crystal.

We were told that one of the priests of St. Maurice was a most intelligent man, and an accomplished antiquary. I must positively remain a week at Vienne, should I return home through France, in order to make his acquaintance.

I have lingered so long among the lions of this ancient city, that my paper is exhausted; and I have only space to assure you that

I am, as ever,

Yours.

LETTER VII.

Valence—Country Quarters—La Voulte—Ruined Fortress—Village Festival—Montelimart—Bourbonnais Hats—Silk-worms—Rapid Travelling—Orange—Triumphal Arch—Amphitheatre.

Orange.

VALENCE, the next town through which we passed after leaving Vienne, is totally uninteresting to the mere traveller, who can bestow but a few passing moments on its general appearance and effect. Here we changed horses, and afforded a stare to several groupes of military idlers, who were killing time with a cigar, and looking all the *ennui* of which country quarters are so prolific; and, ere long, we arrived at the pretty village of La Voulte.

This hamlet is situated at the base of one of the rocks forming the chain of which I have already spoken; and most of the cottages are principally built with the materials obtained

from the ruined fortress that overtops it; and which, *par parenthèse*, is by far the most extensive and imposing of all those that we passed on our journey. The outworks embrace the whole range of the acclivity, and are most wonderfully constructed on the very verge of the precipice. The narrow and difficult approach may yet be traced, as well as the gate of entrance, hewn in the living rock; from whence a vaulted passage gave admittance into the castle yard.

To the left of the road, about a hundred paces from this covered way, the remains of an arch are still perceptible; supposed to be the mouth of a subterranean, communicating with the castle on one side, and on the other with a species of tunnel, which, it has been ascertained, once traversed the bed of the river; and abutted upon the outworks of another dilapidated fortress on the opposite bank.

It was curious, on traversing the village, to see the dark-eyed, mulatto-browed peasant women, standing with their distaffs, or their knitting, at the doors of cottages, of which the walls are in many instances three or four feet in thickness;

and generally built against the external fortifications.

We were fortunate in arriving here on the fête-day of the hamlet; for in the little square all was holiday-happiness! About a score of young men, clad in their best attire, and linked to each other by silk handkerchiefs, were moving through the village, accompanied by drums and violins; and at intervals forming fantastic figures, much in the same manner as children play at, what in nursery parlance is designated "thread my needle," but after a much more elaborate fashion.

I soon discovered that the gist of the game consisted in making captive in the silken chain, every pretty peasant-maiden who happened to cross their line of march; and who was compelled to pay a ransom ere she was liberated. Nor did the sport appear to languish while I was looking on; for whether it were the effect of chance or design, I know not, but it is certain that I saw many prisoners taken, who lost their liberty with a laugh, and bought it back with a kiss!

At Montelimart, also, all was gaiety: the peasants were dancing merrily under the walls of the ramparts, or sitting in groupes beneath the trellised vines at their cottage doors; and here it was that I first remarked the total disappearance of the comical little Bourbonnais gipsey hat, with its high hind peak, its open edge, and its black velvet trimmings; universally replaced henceforward by the large uncut Leghorn, from beneath which the bright black eyes of the south flash out in living light.

Orange, the next stage, is a prettily situated little town, and is approached by a very fine road; although, at this season of the year, the beauty of the scenery is entirely destroyed on all sides, for many leagues, owing to the stripping of the mulberry trees for the supply of the silk-worms which are the staple trade of the neighbourhood.

This scenic ruin was rapidly progressing as we passed along; parties of peasants, with their mules and their sacks, were busied in carrying away the leaves, which women and old men were tearing from the branches; indeed, had it not

been for the luxuriance of the vines, the corn, and occasional groupes of forest timber, we might, by a slight stretch of imagination, have believed ourselves to be travelling in the track of a cloud of locusts. Every cottage into which I peeped had its colony of silk-worms ; and many peasant-women passed us, laden with the bright balls of yellow floss silk which had been spun by their families.

I never so much regretted the necessity of rapid travelling ; for although individually I have no cause for speed, Mr. and Mrs. —, as you are aware, are not so “ unchartered ;” having unfortunately fettered themselves by an appointment at a stated time, which they are anxious to keep. It is really annoying to scamper through such a splendid country, as though it were a match against time ; but we have no remedy.

I have, as you see, commenced my letter in a most business-like manner, by giving you an account of our progress to this fine old city, where we have remained two hours ; one we spent in exploring its lions ; and you have

beneath your eyes the occupation of the other, which is now nearly exhausted.

The town is ill built, and its streets are so narrow, that, in common with several other places through which we passed, it is only to be traversed at a foot's pace, on pain of a fine; but it is approached by a noble road, spanned at about a quarter of a mile from the commencement of the city, by a magnificent triumphal arch, elaborately and delicately wrought, and evidently of great antiquity. It boasts also the remains of an amphitheatre, now almost perished; but of which sufficient trace yet remains to determine its extent, which is greater than that of any other in the kingdom.

I am summoned, and must now conclude. My next despatch will, I trust, be from Marseilles; where I am sure to meet with the rest and comfort to which I have been a stranger since I left England.

Both will be acceptable; and fully appreciated by your hurried but affectionate correspondent.

LETTER VIII.

Avignon—Vaucluse—Aix—Provincial Aristocracy—
Fountains—Antiquity of Aix—The Library—The
Cathedral—The Black Madonna—Spire of St. John
—Approach to Marseilles—Triumphal Arch—
Glimpse of the City—The Mistral.

Marseilles.

EVEN as I hoped, I now write from Marseilles; with the bright Mediterranean bounding the horizon, and kind eyes and kind voices all around me!

I have given up my two first days here to affection and companionship; my third morning is your own. I closed my last letter at Orange; I will open this at Avignon, whose environs are the very perfection of landscape beauty. The ramparts of the town are almost washed by the gleaming Rhône; it is surrounded by feudal remains, lofty mountains, and delicious promenades. Its boulevards are extensive and well

shaded ; and its aspect is altogether cleanly and cheerful.

The streets are less inviting than the suburbs, for they are both narrow and dirty ; but that which lends to Avignon its greatest interest, and leads the eye of the traveller to linger there long and lovingly, is its vicinity to the far-famed Fountain of Vaucluse—the memories of Petrarch and his Laura, which rise up, conjured by the spell of the locality—and the tribute that every feeling heart spontaneously yields to the reminiscences of genius and of beauty.

Aix, the next city which we approached, is one of the most aristocratic places in the south of France ; containing barely a sufficient number of commercial inhabitants to supply the necessities of the more patrician portion of its population. Recent political events have caused a social schism, greatly deplored by those who remember its palmy days of precedence and etiquette.

The streets are well built, the houses handsome, and the fountains ornamental and numerous ; there are no less than three in the “cours” just within the gates of the town ; one of which

is surmounted by a statue of King René; and another is remarkable from its being fed by a warm spring.

Aix is pleasantly seated in a valley, surrounded by fertile hills; its origin is traced back as far as the year 123 before Christ; and it is consequently the most ancient city founded by the Romans in France. It was, at one time, the capital of Provence; and the residence of the Counts of Arragon and Anjou; as well as • that of “le Bon Roi René,” who held his court here: and realized for a time the golden age of chivalry and romance, of gallantry and joy, of love and song.

Many Roman antiquities have been discovered, and preserved in the museum; which also contains a few fine pictures. The library is particularly rich in MSS. their number amounting to 1,200; while the printed volumes exceed 90,000: and the city is indebted for this valuable possession to the munificent patriotism of the Marquis de Mejanès; who bequeathed this noble legacy to Aix, on condition that it should be one of the public establishments of the town.

The cathedral of St. John is extremely ancient ; and contains a superb font of white marble, protected by a domed canopy of the same materials, supported by eight pillars of porphyry. This font, and a black Virgin clad in silver tissue, are the only objects which attract the eye of a stranger, as it wanders over the antique edifice, whose arches are low and gloomy ; while on the opposite side of the square, stretches far along the newly-erected Palace of Justice ; a fine specimen of chaste and simple architecture ; from whose portal you have a good view of the tall and elegantly-proportioned spire of St. John, one of the most striking objects in the city.

The approach to Marseilles is very fine. You pass an immense plain, thickly studded with vineyards, and fields, or rather patches, of corn and pulse ; and closely dotted with well-kept, light-looking *bastides*, or country-houses, gay with their white walls, and green jalousies. Before you rolls the blue and beautiful Mediterranean sea, heaving up its sapphirine bosom beneath a sky of the same brilliant tint. The high-road is crowded with vehicles of every

description, from the heavily-laden *roulage*, or baggage-van of the merchant, to the light phaeton of the idler. A look of business-like importance is on every face; and you feel, long ere you enter the city, that you are approaching a great commercial mart.

A steep ascent, during which you are well nigh smothered by clouds of chalk dust, conducts to a massive triumphal arch, originally intended to commemorate a visit which the Duchesse d'Angoulême paid, years ago, to the Marseillaise. It is still in progress of completion, but its associations are to be revised; and it is now intended to perpetuate the memory of — any thing eligible that may offer!

Passing through (or rather beside) this arch, you descend as abruptly as you mounted, through a tolerably well-built street, having immediately before you, a fine view of the *Cours*; a very agreeable promenade, planted with trees, and flanked by carriage-roads, separating it from the houses. I have already seen two other public walks of the same description, — the *Cours Julien*, and the *Cours Bonaparte*; but

am as yet unable to give you more than this glimpse of the city, as on my arrival, I found my friends waiting to convey me to their *campagne*.

The greeting of kindness and affection was most welcome after my weary journey; and I am already beginning to feel myself at home, surrounded as I am by anxious relatives, books, papers, and all the little comforts of which I have been so long deprived. Fortunately for me the *mistral* has just set in, which greatly tempers the heat; or I think that, overwhelmed as I was with fatigue and exhaustion, I must have sunk under it.

Mr. and Mrs. — have gone on to Naples. I parted from them with great regret, for she was an excellent travelling companion; full of health, spirits, and intelligence. As to Mr. —, if he sleeps through Italy as comfortably as he slumbered through France, he will make a delicious continental campaign! He blames my scribbling propensities, and gave me a serious screed of advice on parting; even to do as he had done, and “cut” all my correspondents.

But no: *ubi mel, ibi apes*,—with such friends as I possess, I must endeavour not to be forgotten; and surely the attempt is in itself enjoyment! To revert to —, although I confess that I laughed more at him than with him during our journey, I was nevertheless sorry to shake hands with him for the last time. After leaving Mrs. — with her mother, he intends to walk through Switzerland. Thank Heaven that we are not to visit Lake Lemman together: such a fellow pilgrim would be the death of me!

I am still undecided with regard to my future plans; and am, moreover, as yet reluctant even to glance at further exertion. I shall probably linger here some months, and consider myself most fortunate that my friends do not inhabit the city; which, from a single hour's experience of its exhalations, did not appear to me to breathe altogether of the "sweet south."

I am writing to you *currente calamo*; and if I throw less of heart into my letters than you looked to find there, attribute it to any thing rather than a decrease of affection. I dare not,

at such a distance from you, venture to *feel* on paper. As the Swiss exiles wept on hearing their mountain-music in a strange land, even so do I suffer when my thoughts rest on home. I turn to trifles to divert memory from her chosen channel; I pass by the precious sands which glitter beneath the wave, to catch at the straws that float upon the surface; and I write to *you* of persons and places comparatively uninteresting; when, did I follow the impulse of my nature, I should lay bare my spirit before you, and lose myself in tears.

The bell of a Franciscan convent on the hill in front of my window, is ringing for vespers, and warns me to conclude.

Peace, and good angels guard you !

LETTER IX.

Effect of Circumstances on Human Character—Contrast between Hope and Memory—Difficulty of Self-dependence to Women—Apology.

Belle de Mai, near Marseilles.

It is extraordinary how sudden and extreme a change is effected in our nature by the necessity of self-dependence. While we have others near us to whom we can cling, on whom we can rely, to whom we may appeal ; our energies remain partially stagnant, our inclinations undefined and irresolute, and our powers dormant.

We are alike physically and mentally torpid : we revel in our helplessness because we love the tendence, the counsels, and the cares of those who are dear to us, and to whom every voluntary obligation is an added tie. We smooth not our own pillow in sickness when we are conscious that a fond hand is ready to remove every fold ; we make not our own happiness in health

when we know that another, "loveliest, kindest, best," will weave for us a brighter and a better garland: and in the sterner and more sober affairs of life, we gladly defer to the judgment of able and zealous friends, rather than incur at once the effort and the responsibility of action.

I am not prepared to deny that there may be a portion of selfishness leavening this self-abandonment; but surely it is the least revolting of all egotism. Remove the power to command this aid, this interest, this guardianship, and, where the mind is strong and well-regulated, the relaxed nerve springs at once into tension, the languid pulse bounds into healthfulness, and the wavering resolution settles into decision; the doubt resolves itself into certainty; the fear of failure fades before the enthusiasm of anticipated success; and, as the serpent escapes from the lifeless skin which he has just shed, and casts off the torpor with the covering; so the spirit, emancipated from as beautiful and as enervating a thrall, throws aside the habit of extraneous dependence, and asserts its own powers of agency.

Doubtlessly the effort is at once a great and a painful one; for the web of affection is woven of so many and such delicate threads, that it requires a gentle hand to put them all aside, without rending asunder some bright and blessed bond, which should go down unbroken and unfaded to the grave!

How much dearer is Memory than Hope! The spells of Memory are all set; and if perchance a shade did creep across the sky while the work of magic was weaving out its bliss, we remember only the sunshine which succeeded it.

But the task of Hope is yet to be wrought. The promise is bright; but, alas! for human life—how many a goodly promise, built up, as it had seemed, of the living rock, has, on the first touch of the tempest, crumbled into ashes as bitter as those which cumber the shores of the Dead Sea!

Memory is a store-house, garnered with costly and with countless treasures; but Hope is a "painted sepulchre," where all is void. Memory is our companion in the night-watches—it is with us on our sick-bed—it is beside us in

our sorrow. If our day of life darken upon us, it is the one star shining amid the gloom, to cheer and to console. Memory dwells with us soberly ; it excites not the pulses, it fevers not the brow, it deludes not the imagination : but Hope is the creature of sunshine and of noonday ; in the hour of sickness and of sorrow, Despair claims his share in her watch ; and should he fail in pushing her from her stool, leaves his less stern coadjutor, Despondency, to contend our spirit with her inch by inch ; nor has she often power to chase him thence.

Hope plays the wanton with us, and beckons us to the indulgence of a thousand fantastic follies ; and often, too often, when we believe that the wished-for goal is won, we find ourselves wearied and panting before the lowered portcullis of Disappointment ; with Reason standing beside us, and smiling scorn upon our efforts.

Let us take Hope as a holiday companion, but let us cherish Memory as a bosom-guest ; it is the friend of all seasons, and of all fortunes.

This blessed boon at least, man bears forth with him into the world—it travels hand in hand

with him ; while Hope moves a few paces before, painting the bleak features of existence with the transient tints of imagination, and making the very cheat a charm !

And if Memory be indeed so great a blessing, he who rends away the threads which have for years been weaving the web of which it is composed, may well approach the task with a trembling heart ; for the hand must be steady that forces them aside ; that no rent, commenced in coldness, and widened in despair, may blight the texture of spent life, when, from amid the wear and tear of the world, he from afar looks back upon the past.

To women the task of partial self-reliance is necessarily tenfold more different and painful ; they are, both naturally and socially, more dependent than men ; they are watched from their cradle with a jealous, as well as a loving eye—they are delicately organized—they are walled round within the charmed circle of domestic guardianship—they are habituated to obedience and self-distrust—they are tutored in concession. And yet, when circumstance de-

mands it of her, and puts forth its claim upon her energies; and the pleasant paths of home are quitted for the broader and the ruder highways of the world; woman also, the softly nurtured, and the delicately bred, who has been hitherto shielded from the rude blasts and scorching suns of life,—she too can emancipate herself from the thralldom of customary indulgences; and take her place in the world's throng, timidly, perhaps, but efficiently.

There is a beauty in the helplessness of woman. The clinging trust which searches for extraneous support is graceful and touching—timidity is the attribute of her sex; but to herself it is not without its dangers, its inconveniences, and its sufferings. Her first effort at comparative freedom is bitter enough, for the delicate mind shrinks from every unaccustomed contact; and the warm and gushing heart closes itself, like the blossom of the sensitive plant, at every approach.

Man may at once determine his position, and assert his place; woman has hers to seek,—and, alas! I fear me, that however she may appear

to turn a calm brow and a quiet lip to the crowd through which she makes her way, that brow throbs, and that lip quivers to the last ; until, like a wounded bird, she can once more wing her way to the tranquil home, where the drooping head will be fondly raised, and the fluttering heart laid to rest.

The dependence of woman in the common affairs of life is, nevertheless, rather the effect of custom than necessity : we have many and brilliant proofs that, where need is, she can be sufficient to herself, and play her part in the great drama of existence with credit, if not with comfort. The yearnings of her solitary spirit, the outgushings of her shrinking sensibility, the cravings of her alienated heart, are indulged only in the quiet holiness of her solitude. The world sees not, guesses not the conflict ; and in the ignorance of others lies her strength. The secret of her weakness is hidden in the depths of her own bosom ; and she moves on amid the heat and the hurry of existence with a seal set upon her nature, to be broken only by fond and loving hands, or dissolved in the tears of recovered home-affection.

And now—what apology am I to offer to you for this long and dull tirade? But in truth, I am sad to-day; and you have so often borne with my mental wanderings, that you have encouraged me to be discursive in your society. And yet I owe you some compensation for so tedious a homily: I will therefore promise never so to offend again; and more,—I will endeavour to fulfil the pledge.

LETTER X.

Friendship—A Landscape—Nôtre Dame de la Garde—
Fairy-Islands — Singular Effect of Mirage—English
Periodicals—Reminiscences—Letters from Home.

Belle de Mai.

WHEN I look back upon the letter which I despatched to you last week, my predominant feeling is one of self-gratulation that I possess a friend sufficiently interested in all that concerns me, to support without a reproach the waywardness of my humour. I had been a voluntary prisoner within the walls of my uncle's pleasant grounds during my brief residence here; and to this circumstance you must attribute the dulness of an epistle, in which I poured out the reflections forced upon me by recent events. I am in a less desponding mood to-day; and in order that you may be enabled to associate me in your mind with the objects by which I am surrounded, I will e'en throw

back the jalousies, and sketch the landscape for you.

Immediately beneath the windows of my apartment is a raised terrace, trellised with creeping vines, from which the grapes already hang in long green clusters ; and beyond this a second, planted with mulberry trees, and gay with roses and rose-laurels. Thence the hill upon which the house is built descends gently to the road, rich with fruit-trees of every description, and corn ripe for the sickle. Beyond the walls of our *terre* the ground again rises, after having formed a delicious valley, dotted over with country-houses, seated amid clusters of olive and almond trees, and each surrounded by its corn-land and vineyard ; its groupes of crimson-blossoming pomegranate trees ; and its flowering myrtles ; while here and there a few tall cypress trees form a dark, cool resting-place for the eye ; which, from the excessive chalkiness of the soil, the brightness of the sky, and the glare of the white buildings, is soon painfully dazzled.

On the other side of this hill lies the city, of which I am happy to say I have not even a

glimpse; while afar off rises a chain of precipitous and sterile rocks, from one of which the castellated fortress of Nôtre Dame de la Garde, (to whose shrine I purpose making a pilgrimage ere long,) looks proudly down over land and sea.

To the right stretch away into the distance the glittering waves of the Mediterranean; while I have also glimpses of the fairy islands of If, Pomègue, and Ratoneau; and to the left, the same precipitous chain, of which Nôtre Dame crowns the highest point, hems in the landscape.

I have already remarked a very singular effect of mirage since my arrival here. These rocks, which are at a considerable distance from us, seem occasionally, on a bright evening, to approach sufficiently near to enable a strong man to hurl a stone against them.

There is something strikingly majestic and solemn in their aspect at these moments. You almost expect that they will move onward until they overwhelm you; and this delusion is encouraged by the fact, that you can then trace every chasm and fissure with the utmost distinctness; although at other times you see only

a huge and frowning mass, too distant to allow you to distinguish any of its details.

I laid aside my pen as I concluded the last sentence, in order to welcome, and to examine a packet of periodicals from England. What visions of brightness and of beauty have they not brought back upon me ! I cannot describe to you the effect which these papers have had upon me. They are like a voice from home. I hear again the graceful murmurings of courtesy, the gay flights of fancy—all that conversational poetry which delights so much in the society of the gifted and the imaginative. I again look and listen, where beauty and genius alike hold the attention captive, in the charmed and charming circle from which my wandering tastes have for awhile exiled me ; where each moment some brilliant idea, only half-expressed, gives you a glimpse of the riches which are one day to meet your eye, fashioned into form and tangibility ; and to recall to your memory the germ whence sprang the bright and powerful thought——But I am wandering again.

I close my letter to-day with less regret than usual. Bright shapes are beside and around me ; and your own sweet smile is in the midst. Can you not picture to yourself how happy I am amid my pile of papers ? Alas ! it is a joy which will not endure long ; my own eagerness will abridge its term. I have not been so light of heart since I received my last letters from home. You, who know how I am beloved, with all my faults, beside my own hearth, can well imagine what letters they were,—full of tenderness, and anxiety, and regret ; letters which, as I read them, almost made me think myself a savage for my truancy ! But I have nevertheless still humanity enough left, to feel and to appreciate the value of your friendship and affection.

LETTER XI.

Nôtre Dame de la Garde—Les Dames de la Halle—Origin of the Fortress—Pomègue and Ra'oneau—Local Tradition—The Château d'If—Female Combatants.

Belle de Mai.

IN my last letter I endeavoured to make you acquainted with the lovely scene on which, each time that I uncloze my casement, I look down. To-day I mean to talk to you of Nôtre Dame de la Garde; an individual of no little importance in the eyes of the Marseillaise.

I have just returned from the city, where I went in order to witness a procession in her honour, got up with both care and cost for the especial edification of the Dames de la Halle; the Lady of the Fortress being their peculiar patroness, and the worshipped idol of the fish-market!

The hill-seated edifice, in whose chapel this favourite Madonna is visibly present to her ad-

ming worshippers in the shape of a gilded image of immense dimensions, was, in the sixth century, a look-out station ; and on the crest of the height stood a tall tower, which corresponded with others of the same description situated at intervals along the coast to Antibes. A chapel was built against this tower in the thirteenth century, which became a celebrated point of pilgrimage ; and subsequently Francis the First enclosed both these buildings within a fort, which is only remarkable from its position. Some portion of the works are still kept up, but merely used as a signal-station for the vessels in the offing ; and it is strong only in the protecting presence of the inhabiting Madonna.

The coast around is fine and bold, and the fantastically-formed rocks cut sharply against the clear sky. The little island, on which stands the Château d'If, is almost covered by the fortress ; while those of Ratoneau and Pomègue stretch far into the blue sea, are united by a pier, and overshadow with their abrupt cliffs the little bay of *Dieu-donné*. Each is

crowned by its partially dilapidated fort ; and on Ratoneau the red-roofed buildings of the new lazaretto glare out amid the blank sterility around, hot and isolated.

There is a local tradition attached to this island which is worthy of repetition. Here it is :—

In the year 1765, a brave old soldier, named Francœur, was one of the garrison of its now dilapidated fort : and this man, who had once or twice previously been insane, but who was considered at that period perfectly free from the malady, suddenly conceived the absurd idea that he was King of Ratoneau. He was at the moment posted as sentinel at the door of the dungeon, and his comrades were absent in search of their daily provisions. Acting upon the impulse of his disordered phantasy, he lowered the portcullis, rushed to the powder magazine, loaded the guns, and having arranged his battery in the most scientific manner, began firing upon his astonished fellow-soldiers, who were scattered over the island, quite unprepared for so sudden and determined an attack, and who

had no alternative but to conceal themselves as they best could among the rocks, until a boatman was at length prevailed upon to venture to their assistance, and bring them off. The island was, at the time, covered with flocks of goats; and these were the only subjects over whom the self-elected King Francœur was enabled to assert his sovereignty; of which the proof consisted in their destruction, as the cravings of his hunger prompted. This was the only food on which he subsisted; and for a few days it appeared to suffice him, for he continued unweariedly the duties of his watch, leaving the fort every night with a lantern in his hand to visit the outposts; and amusing himself during the day by firing on the Château d'If.

As all his movements were overlooked by the garrison of that fortress, it was not difficult to take him at a disadvantage; and the Duke de Villars, who was at that period governor of Marseilles, despatched a company of infantry to dethrone the distraught sovereign, who surrounded him during his nightly perambulation, and made him a prisoner. Regal to the last,

Francœur opposed no vulgar violence to the legitimate coercion of the soldiery, but exclaimed, with a theatrical gesture ; “ Brave men ! I owe you no unkindness—no anger ; all is regular, and you have done your duty according to the rules of war. The King of France is more powerful than I am—his troops are more numerous, and better disciplined—I surrender myself with the honours of war—I ask only to march out with my pipe and my *havresac*.”

The reasonable request of the abdicating monarch was granted ; and he was first removed to the lunatic asylum, and afterwards to the Hôtel des Invalides, where he held his court in peace until his death.

The Marseillaise have another version of this story, which ascribes the feat to a criminal who had escaped the hands of justice ; and I cannot undertake to assert which is the correct one ; but meanwhile, *l'un vaut bien l'autre !*

The Château d'If was once a state-prison. The Island was fortified in 1529 by order of Francis I., and the cells of the castle have been frequently tenanted. As I sometimes lean from

my window, and watch the twilight deepening about it, I give way to a thousand gloomy fancies ! I cannot imagine a more dreadful fate than hopeless captivity amid such a scene. So drear a dungeon, with so bright a world about it ! The glad sunshine dancing upon the waters—the song of the fisherman coming upon the wind—the white sails of the passing vessels glittering in the light—all free and happy things, whose very sight and sound would tend to make the iron of captivity eat yet deeper into the heart—must have rendered this prison the very dungeon of despair !

But to recur to the procession. I had seen many, both in Portugal and France ; but any thing so utterly incongruous, or so little calculated to inspire devotional feelings, as that which the good folks of Marseilles got up in honour of *Nôtre Dame de la Garde*, I assuredly never beheld.

At the accession of Louis Philippe, all religious processions were discontinued in this city ; but they were resumed during the visitation of the cholera, at the request of some *dévôtes*, who

deemed wax tapers and incense, more efficacious than bended knees and stricken spirits ; and these gorgeous ceremonials were consequently renewed with tenfold more parade than ever.

As the procession of their patroness, (from which I have just returned,) was the first that had been held in her honour for a considerable time, the Dames de la Halle resolved to celebrate it with corresponding magnificence ; and they consequently made an offering of unusual cost. It consisted of a tunny-fish of wrought silver, a foot and a half in length ; which was exhibited in the market for several days to the admiration of the pious, and doubtlessly also to the satisfaction of the donors ; who have thus purchased the enviable right to cheat and do battle for the next twelve months.

When I say do battle, I must not, however, be misunderstood ; the conflicts of the women of this country are those of the tongue only, for it is rare, indeed, that they ever come to blows : and yet these encounters cannot be termed bloodless, for it is an every-day occurrence to see them scold, gesticulate, and threaten them-

selves into so awful a paroxysm of passion, that the veins of their throat swell to the size of cords, and appear each moment in danger of bursting ; when suddenly down falls one of the contending parties perfectly senseless, who is immediately borne off by her partisans to the nearest surgeon, and copiously bled.

The force of passion can no further go !

LETTER XII.

The Procession—Blue Penitents—Fine Chorus—Marseillaise Churches—Iron Belfry—The Dead alive—Locusts.

FROM the worshippers, I revert to the worshipped. On our arrival in the city, the streets through which the procession was to pass presented a gay and singular appearance. All the balconies were covered with drapery ; here it was of white, its broad frills heaving in the wind ; there it was coloured satin, or damask, its heavy fringes falling low over the portal ; while that which gave to the scene its peculiar character was the immense number of flags suspended across the street. You cannot conceive such a medley ! There were the colours of almost every nation under heaven,—all borrowed from the ships in the port. The Russian eagle was coquetting with the stars and stripes of

American independence; the red cross of Sardinia was flaunting with the snowy flag of Austria; the broad banner of England was buffeting with its heavy folds the keys and triple mitre of Papal supremacy; and the tri-colours of France and Holland were contrasting their perpendicular and horizontal glories. The departmental and signal flags were making a strange demonstration of intelligence and municipal property; and the effect of the whole was comic enough to withdraw one's thoughts altogether from the forthcoming pageant.

At length, however, the firing of petards announced the departure of the procession from its starting place; and soon a confused mass of banners, and flowers, and crucifixes, were seen moving down the hill in the distance.

First, came a detachment of soldiers to clear the way; and these were followed by two rows of old men, holding wax tapers in their hands, and muttering prayers in time to the distant chaunting of the priests. This living stream rolled slowly by, and the aged men were followed by others in the prime of life, these by youths,

and the youths in their turn by boys, some of them mere children. The centre of the space was meagrely occupied. A solitary priest hurried by, book in hand, and eyes every where, endeavouring in vain to preserve order among the laical portion of the pageant; then a white-robed banner-bearer, with two assistant *garçons du choir*; and ultimately the plot thickened.

The children were clad in "party-coloured raiment," were crowned with roses, and bore long wands decorated with artificial flowers, and streamers of ribbon, which would have inspired the enthusiastic Florian with an idyl, so pastoral did they look.

Priests came thicker and faster, after a time, into the open space; and as the last ripple of masculine life retired, the female portion of the ceremonial advanced to occupy their place.

First, in the same order as had been observed by the men, came the aged women, clad in widows' weeds, with their waxen tapers lighted, and the wan flames struggling under the bright beams of the daylight. Several of these worthy females held their prayer-books upside down;

but as they did not look a whit less pious and solemn on that account, I presume that the same purpose was answered, as though they had been reversed. These were succeeded by women of fewer years; and, as before, we progressed slowly down to the children.

Then came forward a bevy of little angels of both sexes; some of whom looked very weary, and others very insubordinate. I saw hair pulled, and toes trodden on, with a malignity and pertinacity which merited to have been mortal, among the masculine members of the party; while many a little cherub of the other sex minced along, with her dark wild eyes glancing in every direction, and her curly head erect in all the consciousness of unaccustomed finery.

This angelic bevy passed us by amid the waving of banners, the steaming of incense, and the deep chaunting of their earthly representatives, the monks; and then between two rows of muslin-clad priests, was borne a portable altar, gaily decorated, and preceded by five incense-bearers.

The next feature of the procession was entirely new to me: it consisted of a numerous group of bare-footed Blue Penitents,—their heads covered as closely as their bodies with the coarse heavy serge that composed their dress, (in which holes were cut for their eyes,) and singing, as they moved forward, the celebrated chorus of fiends in *Robert le Diable*. What holy words were honoured by this extraordinary adaptation, I am unable to say; but the effect of the fine unaccompanied voices of the monks, muffled as they were, was positively thrilling. I would walk five miles, even under a Marseillaise sun, to hear it again!

Drums, and priests, and wax candles, and the bishop bearing the Host under a canopy of white silk, fringed and laced with gold, succeeded; and a party of military, and finally all the *canaille* of the city, contributed their presence to swell the volume of piety opened in honour of Nôtre Dame de la Garde.

That monkish chorus haunts me yet: it was magnificent!

My eyes are still dazzled; and, to tell the

truth, I am wearied by looking on a scene in which I could not sympathize. I endeavoured, on my way home, to recover my equilibrium, by spending half an hour in one of the deserted churches; but I failed,—for solitary although it was, such vile specimens of tastelessness as the Marseillaise shrines I never yet met with: bad paintings, dirty point-lace, and tawdry tinsel meet you at every turn.

I trust that I made an unhappy selection; for certain it is, that instead of solemnity, I encountered gloom, and that earthy chill which brings the scent and the sensation of the grave with it, and makes you feel at every pore that you are treading on tombs,—an impregnation of mortality with which one has not always nerve and spirit to contend.

There is a church in the city with a singular belfry of transparent iron-work, which I can see from my window. Its heavy bell has just began to toll for a funeral: and the sound comes booming over the valley with most gloomy distinctness. The association of the death-bell is doubly painful here, where many wretches are buried

alive every year ; and the *sang froid* with which this is admitted, is frightful. There is a miserable hunchback living about half a mile from the spot whence I now write, who resuscitated not a hundred paces from the grave which was yawning for him ; and who tells the tale as coolly as though he were narrating the most inconsequent adventure.

The Judaic regulation of not suffering a second sun to set upon a corpse, is here enforced by the climate ;—but I will not pursue the subject, particularly in my present mood.

The locusts are chirping in the mulberry trees, each like a score of crickets : the natives frequently capture them, and keep them in cages in order to enjoy what they designate as their “singing.”

I have no taste for such music !

LETTER XIII.

Cholera at Toulon—Band of Robbers—First Fears—
One of the Would-be Miserables—How to be happy
—A Domestic Picture.

Belle de Mai.

A thousand thanks for your affection-breathing letter: just at this moment when "death is upon our highways, and terror in our streets," it was doubly welcome! You, in your happy England, will but hear the grumbling of the thunder afar off, but we feel the very reverberation of the peal. The cholera is raging at Toulon,—the galley-slaves have refused any longer to bury the dead,—the soldiers are employed in making coffins,—and some few panic-stricken wretches who fled to Marseilles to escape this modern plague, have perished since their arrival.

To-day we have had accounts which make one spirit-sick! Man, surrounded by horrors,

crawling beneath the dark wings of the destroying angel, unconscious where the next vial may be poured forth, has dared to deepen the misery of this Almighty infliction with his own crime.

The ringleaders of an organized band of robbers have just been secured at Toulon: this brotherhood of sin amounted to three hundred souls. Under the pretence of succouring the sick, they pillaged the dying, despoiled the dead, wrung from the bereaved orphan the bequest of his lost parents; and committed every enormity which cupidity and ruthlessness could suggest. One of these ringleaders proves to be no other than the Commissary of Police; and I need not expatiate upon the sensation which this discovery has caused.

Some of the Marseillaise have already taken alarm, and left the city. Should the evil increase, (which may Heaven avert!) we shall, I think, make a pilgrimage to Avignon; and amid the shades of Vaucluse, and the memories of Petrarch and Laura, endeavour to shut out all painful associations. Would that we could wander there together!

It seems difficult, as I look upwards at the sky above my head, so bright in its blue beauty, and then onward at the mirror-like surface of the tranquil and lovely sea ; to believe that suffering and death—a painful, a miserable death, can be so near me.

* * * * *

Your letter is a constantly-recurring enjoyment ; it is sunny and brilliant like yourself. How do you contrive to be at once so witty and so beloved ? I will wring your secret from you, when we meet again.

I could not but smile at your account of —. He fancies himself miserable, when in point of fact he is only querulous. He has always been *aux points des bayonnettes* with his destiny ever since I have known him ; and he has really cried “ wolf ” so long, that if any great evil were actually to befall him, he would find some difficulty in convincing his friends of the fact.

— is a perfect type of perverted human nature ; and there are too many like him. I have heard of women who considered it good *ton* always to be in ill health : — appears

to think it interesting to be always in ill luck. Do you know the root of his mental disease? I will whisper it in your ear,—it is *envy*! He deserves to be miserable, for, despite ten thousand blessings, he is always discontented. If he loses a legacy, or an election, he grieves less over his own failure than he does at the success of the opposite party; and yet he is not in need either of money or political power.

The great secret of human unhappiness may, I think, be frequently traced to this unfortunate yearning after some definite benefit, which is withheld from us. We are so prone to individualize our ideas of perfect contentment; and to imagine that did we possess such and such things, or were we such or such persons, we should have nothing left to desire.

How vain, how deceptive is this mode of reasoning,—if indeed conclusions like these can for one moment be confounded with reason! How know we what the hidden recesses of the envied one's bosom shroud from our view? How know we that, even although the right hand may be withdrawn from the heart, the

living fire is not there? Who shall say that were the veil once rent from the sanctuary of that man's spirit, we should not find the idol we were prepared to worship, a thing of clay?

Nor are we by any means more sure that, if placed in the position which we covet, we should be competent to its duties. Such a doubt is revolting, perhaps, to our self-love, but it is nevertheless rational. We are reluctant to believe ourselves deficient where we see others competent to succeed; and yet how frequently are we compelled, not only to *admit*, but to *feel* that we are so? Our habits, our social position, our tastes, our talents, and our principles, probably might, for any thing which we can aver to the contrary while the experiment remains untried, render our possession of the coveted boon a state of perpetual and Sisyphus-like warfare with our own peace.

The greatest evil attendant on this straining after shadows exists, however, in the fact that, while we are persuading ourselves of the precision and completeness with which we should fulfil the duties of the coveted station, we

are neglecting those of our own ; and forgetting that every state entails its peculiar responsibility.

How idle is it, then, to consume life in vain longings after what is at best only a doubtful good ; and to suffer the sands of our glass to run out, and the oil of our lamp to be expended, while we are seeking to regulate the dial, and to trim the taper of our neighbour !

Forgive my sententiousness ! If it has bored you, visit the infliction on —, who drew it forth. God ! to look round the world, and to see how much misery really exists, it seems a sin that such a man should murmur.

The picture which you have drawn of your domestic circle would have suited the pencil of Albano,—a group of loves and graces ! You are worthy of your happiness, because you are conscious of it.

LETTER XIV.

Costume of the Marseillaise Peasantry — Provençal
Patois—Garlic and Snails—Custom-House Corps—
Dead Pig.

You ask me if the Marseillaise peasantry have a peculiar costume? They have; and it is moreover eminently picturesque when worn by a young and pretty woman. One thing, however, I must beg you to bear in mind, which is, that nine out of ten among the females have small and well-turned feet and ankles; and this fact will possibly account for the very Swiss-like curtailment of their petticoats.

Fancy a pair of well-made and well-fitting shoes, of any colour you please, sandalled over stockings of a sort of mud-coloured cotton; a full, quilted petticoat of showy print, red or blue predominating; a close-sitting vest of white, without sleeves; those of the under-garment being neatly embroidered, and descending to the

elbow from beneath the shoulder-strap of the vest, over which the slings supporting the petticoat are conspicuous, from their being always of a different colour from the rest of the dress; hair neatly braided behind the ears, which are decorated with ear-rings of immense size, formed of pieces of mother-of-pearl as large as a shilling; and over a close cap with a very deep worked frill, the large light hat of uncut Leghorn, which some of the younger *paysannes* put on in the most coquettish way imaginable—Fancy all this; and you will believe that a Marseillaise peasant girl looks jaunty enough as she trips along among the vines.

Their *patois* is a most extraordinary jargon; but after the first few days, it is easily understood. How such jarring particles could ever have been jumbled together, I am quite at a loss to imagine, as you may detect a mixture of French, English, Italian, and Latin; and I have no doubt that any one competent to the task, might pick out words of High-Dutch and Arabic; for each individual here realizes to him or herself “the scene of the plain of Shinar.”

Jesting aside, it is the strangest medley I ever heard; and the women, when they are at all excited, literally scream it out at the very pitch of their voices.

The good people of Marseilles are great amateurs of snails, which are brought to market in immense quantities, and make a very disgusting appearance. They also devour a compound called *Provençal* butter, which is made by pounding garlic in a mortar with oil, into the consistency of cream; and this is the favourite accompaniment to the snails! The peasants on our grounds collect them after rain: and even the very servants in the house will leave the best food in the larder to enjoy this delectable mess!

Every avenue to the city is haunted by one of the custom-house corps, who makes our servant empty the basket which he carries, ere he is allowed to pass. Nothing is permitted to enter the town in the shape of food or wine, as these things are untaxed, and consequently cheaper beyond the barriers; and they carry their strictness on this point to a most ridiculous and con-

temptible pitch; which I cannot better demonstrate than by relating a fact that occurred here very lately.

The wife of an agricultural labourer, who has a daughter married in Marseilles, wished to spend a day with her; and knowing that her child could ill afford to give her a meal, she put into her pocket a piece of coarse bread, a morsel of boiled bacon, and a small bottle of a liquid called here *piquette*, which the lower orders manufacture from the refuse of the grapes after the wine is drawn off, and which is worth, perhaps, nearly a halfpenny a bottle. In vain did the poor woman, whose protruding pocket had created suspicion, display her hoard, and explain her purpose: the meal was contraband, and it was seized! What would good, easy, well-nurtured John Bull say to this?

One more anecdote, and I have done. An American vessel entered the port, on board of which a pig had just littered; and the *douane* having duly examined the ship from stem to stern, very carefully counted over the little family, and entered them on his list. A day

or two afterwards the captain of the vessel in question being on shore, happened to mention to his man of business that he had lost one of his young pigs. "I am glad you have told me this," was the reply, "or on sailing you must have paid a duty on it, as having been consumed in the harbour. Have you thrown it overboard?" He was answered in the negative. The important demise was promptly reported to the customs, and one of the corps was sent on board with the captain to investigate the truth of the statement; the dead pig was produced; and the officer of customs gravely rowed out some distance in the harbour, and then, with his own official hands, consigned poor piggy to a watery grave!

Is not this fact worth a score of fictions?

LETTER XV.

Cholera at Marseilles—Sultry Weather—Death-bell of the Carmelite Church—Thunder-storm—Hurricane—Ravages of the Storm among the Mountains.

Belle de Mai, July 17, 1835.

THE evil we have deprecated has overtaken us—The cholera is once more at Marseilles! Heaven only knows whether the refugees from Toulon caused, or merely hastened, the visitation; but it is now indwelling with us. Many of the inhabitants of the city have already fled, and we were anxious to be of the number; but not a post-horse is to be had for a fortnight; and we are compelled to wait until the 21st, even for the *coupé* of the Diligence to Avignon.

The heat is intense. The locusts (at this moment doubly shrill and distasteful from association!) are filling the air with their harsh chirpings,—not a leaf is stirred,—the Pestilence is abroad!

The committee of safety have established four *bureaux* of health ; and an *affiche* is posted in the city, to urge the people not to fly to the country to spread the disease, and thus place themselves without the pale of prompt and certain assistance ; but rather, on the first symptom of the malady, to apply at the nearest *bureau*, whence medical aid will be instantly afforded. A lantern of red glass is to be suspended over the doors of these sanitary establishments during the night.

July 18th.

Another day of terror ! The sun is broad and scorching : the sea lies rippleless like a sheet of lead, for there is not a breath of air to break its mirror-like surface. In the quarantine-ground rides a French seventy-four at anchor, with a yellow flag flying at her mast-head ; for she too has come from an infected land. There is not a cloud upon the sky ; it is one glare of bright clear blue : the very locusts are still ; and not a sound is to be heard but the death-bell of the *Eglise des Carmes* on the

hill above my window, which has tolled all day without intermission.

The city is one vast burying-place ; nothing but funerals meet you at every step. Nor is this all—We have no longer a “city of refuge,”—we are surrounded by infection,—Aix, Avignon, Nismes, Montpellier, all share one common fate.

What a dead stillness, with that frightful bell booming through it ! It falls upon my ear like the voice of the destroying angel, slowly murmuring, “More, more !” And that dead-looking sea, without a shadow upon it, save that of the infected ship : and those huge rocks, gleaming white and ghastly under the hot sun : and the motionless trees, seeming like things hewn in stone, which had never trembled to the breath of heaven. I parch even in my chamber as I look upon the hot and breathless landscape.

July 19th.

Yet another day of doubt and dread ! but, thank God ! some little hope is now mingled with the fear : for the frightful stillness of the last four-and-twenty hours exists no longer.

It has been thundering without intermission since the morning. The peal bursts over the sea, then runs rattling along the rocks which line the coast, and as it begins to die away, is caught up by the mountains behind the house, and flung back again in prolonged echoes ; which almost universally endure until a fresh sheet of vivid lightning has released the imprisoned thunder once more.

I cannot attempt to make you understand the sublimity of this perpetual and thrilling discord ; it is as though the mighty rocks by which we are surrounded were brought into violent collision, and riven to their very hearts !

As yet we have had no rain ; but the sky is louring, and the sea is swept by a light breeze —there is hope in the whole aspect of nature. Meanwhile the death-bell of the Carmelite church continues to toll, and may be heard even amid the crashing of the thunders.

The sun is sinking, and there is a faint ripple upon the ocean, and a murmur among the leaves. A hot breath fans my forehead ; and something falls slowly and plashing on the stones of the

terrace. It is rain ! large, heavy drops, shed, as it seems, reluctantly; yet still they continue their monotonous descent,—I could weep for very joy as they fall around me.

Now the mulberry trees heave and sigh, and the lesser shrubs catch the coming breeze from the sea. It comes languidly, but surely to us; and the large drops which have rested on the leaves, are scattered on every side. Surely the angel of mercy has unfurled its wings; and the tears of pity for a fainting and groaning world have fallen from the bright plumage !

We are anxiously watching the storm-cloud; but it has not yet reached the city. Should the breeze freshen, it will soon be with them.

July 20th.

I have just left the lower terrace, where I had some difficulty in keeping my feet; it is blowing a perfect hurricane; and the rain is descending in torrents, accompanied by a storm of thunder and lightning. You may believe how grateful we are for so providential an interposition of Divine mercy. The news from the city

is cheering in the extreme: there has been no new case of cholera in the night, though the previously smitten are still dying in some numbers. You will sympathize in our heartfelt joy!

Every thing around us is looking beautiful as a new creation. The rain has renewed the freshness of the magnificent landscape; and even inanimate nature seems as though it offered up its tribute of gratitude to the saving hand which has just been outstretched to us.

July 21st.

The thunder still peals along the sky, but it comes faintly from a distance. God grant that it may now be giving hope to the other infected cities! The rain has ceased, but the intelligence which we continue to receive is as favourable as we may dare to anticipate. The new cases of disease are few; and men's brows are brighter in the consciousness of returning security. Ere long, I trust to have to tell you that the evil is overpast.

Again I can look with pleasure on the dark cypresses. For the last few days I have turned

away my eyes from them, with I know not how many gloomy associations! The thunder is once more bursting over us, and the rain descends in torrents—the crash is immediately above the house, and the reverberation is awful; the forked lightning darts quivering along; and already the lower lands are flooded with water, while every precipitous declivity becomes a rushing channel.

The storm of yesterday has done considerable mischief on the higher lands, having swept away the corn which the peasants had prepared for treading out: to us it was a blessing unaccompanied by any drawback.

I sincerely hope that my next letter may be written in a more cheerful spirit. I despatch this with reluctance; but it is impossible to write otherwise than gloomily at such a season.

Offer my acknowledgments and regards to all those who remember and regret me. I fear you do but judge after your own heart, when you tell me that they are many.

LETTER XVI.

Virulence of the Cholera—Deserted State of the City—
The young Greek—Voluntary Captivity—The Cholera-Messenger—Awful Storm—Effects of Absence
on sincere Affection.

Belle de Mai, Aug. 3.

WE are yet in quarantine! The storm that I mentioned in my last, and which we believed was to bring healing on its wings, renewed all the force of the malady, or rather, increased it tenfold; the electric particles with which the atmosphere was charged being most favourable to the spread of the disease.

On the 23d of July, the number of deaths was doubled; and all is now terror, flight, and consternation. The victims have amounted to six hundred each day. Three-fourths of the shops in the city are closed; the very workmen who are dependent on their labour for existence, have fled the town, and are now existing on the cha-

city of the benevolent, and sleeping in the open air; while every tradesman who possesses a *bastide* has closed his shop, and hurried to the country.

We scarcely see a group pass along the road, of which some of the individuals composing it are not in mourning: the deep bell of the Carmelite church does not cease its death-knell throughout the day; and the bodies for interment have become so numerous, as to render it necessary to discontinue preparing individual graves; and two trenches have consequently been opened in the cemetery, where they are covered with quick-lime.

The *Bureau de Secours* are in constant activity; and a party of young men, of whom I am proud to say that several are English, have devoted themselves to the care of the sick, in conjunction with the *Sœurs de la Charité*; and I regret to add, that these benevolent women have lost two of their number, who fell victims to their zeal a few days ago. With the exception of this self-sacrificing band, men everywhere avoid each other's contact, and seem to see on every brow the signet of contagion.

A young Greek landed here on the 26th, whom a rumour of plague had driven from Alexandria: two days afterwards he was a corpse! He was a fine, accomplished young man, in his twenty-second year, full of life and health. But I will not multiply, as I might, such anecdotes of misery.

On the 25th and 26th, those attacked by the disease only lingered about five hours; and a physician of Marseilles declared that, on the latter day, it was as if a thunder-cloud had burst over the city; for during one hour and a half, the people were stricken on all sides,—in their houses,—in the streets,—beside the fountains—in the market-places—their occupations and positions bearing no analogy to each other at the moment; and every case during this interval of horror was a fatal one!

We have, of course, continued prisoners to the grounds; which, fortunately for us at this conjuncture, are of considerable extent; and every evening we receive a report of the progress of the malady. You would pity us, could you see the eagerness with which we anticipate the return of

our messenger; our sickening dread of an unfavourable report; our feeble, scarcely-expressed hope of amendment. We stand altogether on the terrace to catch the first glimpse of his countenance; and to guess, even in the distance, at what it may portend.

To-day we have cause to anticipate a frightful increase to the disease, for the most violent storm which I ever remember to have witnessed, broke over the city last night, and endured for several hours. We had, in fact, *no* night; for the fierce and forked lightnings shot through the vast sheets of paler flame so brightly and so rapidly, that there was scarcely an interval of darkness; while the hoarse and echoing thunder ran rattling along the rocks, and burst over the sea with a violence really awful.

Of the rain which accompanied it, I need only tell you that it washed down part of a strong stone wall, about a hundred yards from the house; and that the carriage-road is partially torn up, and resembles the bed of a torrent.

We shall have heavy news to-night!

How often have I thought, during this last dreary week, of your parting caution to me, not

to suffer any circumstance to weaken my affection for you, nor to allow new ties to supersede long-loved associations. Both the one and the other appear to me impossible. New localities may indeed induce new habits, for habit is only powerful on the spot, and amid the objects in the midst of which it was first engendered : but love is independent of place—every where omnipotent ; and when absence tries its strength, only puts forth a bolder wing, and takes a longer flight. The heart scoffs at space. Time, circumstance, and all the contingencies of life alike fail to weaken an affection which is really worthy of the name.

Since we parted, I have at times drained the cup of pleasure ; and, as I held it to my lips, the draught lost half its charm, for I remembered that you were not by to partake of it. Now, with death so near me,—a death which every breath of wind may waft into the recesses of my own chamber, I mingle in my prayer for deliverance, a thanksgiving that you are absent.

Yes ; I have learnt to bless the fate that separated us !

LETTER XVII.

Continuance of the Malady—The Plague-Flag—Atrophizing Effects of Fear on Human Sympathies.

Belle de Mai, Aug. 9th.

DID you not so imperatively demand it of me, I would not continue to harass your mind, and to increase your anxiety, by letters which must only tend to do both.

What can I say to you? I have no subject, save the cholera; for we talk on, we think of, no other.

Its ravages are still frightful! Although every individual who had it in his power to leave the city has now done so, and that nine-tenths of the houses are shut up, the daily number of victims yet average from twenty to thirty. Scarcely a soul is to be seen in the streets; all commerce, save that of edibles is at an end; the Exchange is abandoned; and all is terror

and precaution. Each impresses upon his neighbour the necessity of keeping up the *morale*; and each experiences in himself the extreme difficulty of so doing. Thank God that those who are dearest to me are far distant !

A new and melancholy feature is added to our position. To prevent the entrance of those persons into the city, who have been accustomed to venture thither daily in order to ascertain the state of the disease, the authorities have arranged a set of signals; and now a plague-flag, announcing the number of victims during the past four-and-twenty hours, is hoisted each evening at *Nôtre Dame de la Garde*. I will not attempt to describe to you what I felt the first time I saw it flying !

The finest fruits and vegetables are perishing around us; they are prohibited articles of food. The moon rises broad and bright every night, and the wind from the sea adds to the cool beauty of the evening; but we dare not enjoy either, for the physicians have decided that the night-air is death.

How long will this state of things endure ?

Alas! we are afraid to seek an answer. Human sympathy seems to be absorbed in human selfishness : there is no time to mourn the dead, nor to weep over the dying, when the arrow may be already winged which is to strike ourselves. We do not ask '*who* is dead?' but '*how many?*' In short, we tremble for those who are around our own hearth, and have no grief to spare for others.

All this is hideous! To you, who are living in security, it will, I doubt not, appear hateful; and it is so,—but nevertheless, I fear that it is the natural consequence of a common misery. In moments of peace and enjoyment, the heart can so well afford to sympathize with the suffering of others; in those of trembling and tears, it closes over *its own*,—over the few loved ones who make its world. Alas! for the many to whom that world is now a wilderness!

LETTER XVIII.

The Mediterranean at Sun-rise—A Local Sketch—The
Fille-de-Chambre.

Belle de Mai, Aug. 9.

At length I am enabled to write once more to you in the language of hope! The pestilence is not yet at an end; but, thanks to an Almighty Providence! it is fast subsiding. The number of victims was yesterday reduced to ten, and has been daily diminishing from the time I last wrote.

We have already profited by this happy change; and although we do not intend to venture for some time into the city, we have extended our boundary; and for the last four mornings have strolled at sun-rise to the sea-side, to see the fishermen draw their nets.

Those only who, like ourselves, have been imprisoned for a length of time under the sha-

dowy wings of the destroying angel, can appreciate the enjoyment which we derived from this simple spectacle, and the feeling that we are once more free to mingle with our fellow-men in comparative security.

I wish that I were competent to give you a perfect description of the scene on which we look, as we sit upon a ledge of rock overhanging the spot where the fish are landed.

The sun rises majestically above the lofty chain of rocks which rear their stern and sterile outline far into the sky ; and at whose base the clear Mediterranean lies spread out, like a sheet of turquoise fringed with pearl. The soft balsamic breeze comes sighing languidly along the ripple ; and the sails of the fishing-boats, whose shadows rest upon the water, gleam out white and dazzling, as the first sunbeams touch them.

At the early hour I have described, the mists are yet enveloping the summits of the rocks ; and as they yield reluctantly to the glowing influence of the ascending sun, they roll back in the most picturesque and quaintly-fashioned shapes ;

while in their retreat they slowly reveal, first the dark mass, and ultimately the tall towers of the castellated buildings which crown the heights, cutting sharply against the sky.

In the distance, the roofs and spires of a portion of the city are seen bathed in light; while even the huge, tasteless convent of St. Maurice, which I had ever hitherto regarded as a mere blot in the landscape, adds at this hour to the beauty of the scene. It rises far to the left, and in such a position that one of its casements catches the beams of the early sun, and flings back the brightness, like a cluster of jewels, from its many-tinted panes. It is a glorious, but a cheating splendour, for a living death is in the back-ground—a Rembrandt-like picture, of which the lights are rich and various, while the gloom is that of the grave.

You must fill up the fore-ground of my sketch with the blue beauty of the tideless Mediterranean sea, and the group of fishermen; and then I am sure you will cease to be astonished that I walk a mile over a chalky road at an hour which never hitherto saw me out of my room, save on

some imperative occasion, to enjoy so beautiful a scene.

Our partial emancipation is most welcome; for although, through the mercy of an all-gracious Providence, we have hitherto escaped every symptom of the malady, we have not failed to suffer severely from anxiety: as for myself, I confess that I never remember my spirits to have been at so low an ebb. There is, however, one individual of the family who has, throughout the whole progress of the disease, remained proof even against the minor misery of fear. This fortunate exception is a stout, clumsy-looking *fille-de-chambre*, who makes the house ring from morning till night with a voice which would do no dishonour to one of the sterner sex; while the subjects of her songs often make me smile in spite of myself. She favours us with every gradation of sentiment, from a *chagrin d'amour* to a *doux délire*; nor, during this period of doubt and dread, has any one felt an inclination to arrest "the tide of song."

This syren insisted (for French servants possess the *volonté d'agir* in a supreme degree) on

going, one day last week, into the city to inquire for a trunk which she had left in the charge of some of her friends,—the said friends, as she very quietly remarked, being probably dead, when it behoved her to look after her property. In vain did her mistress argue with her on the impropriety of running such a risk, and the probability of contagion to an individual rushing from pure air into an infected atmosphere. Elise was determined; and no argument could shake her resolution. She went accordingly, and returned in high spirits, having secured her trunk, and even found her connexions still in existence. We all collected eagerly round her to hear her report; and it was so perfectly characteristic that I will give it in her own words.

“Well, mesdames;” she said, flinging off her large hat; “nothing is to be seen in the city but funerals, and priests, and crucifixes; and people hurrying away, whenever a body happens to be carried by, with handkerchiefs steeped in vinegar under their noses. But I had no fear, not I,—I had no cholera in my pocket; so I waited

to see ten of them brought out to be buried ;
and the priests trotted on at a pretty pace, I
assure you, with *ces coquins de corps-là*."

Such an anecdote will not bear comment ; nor
is there, perhaps, another country beside this,
where such a thing could have occurred.

LETTER XIX.

Books—Bulwer's "Student"—A Poetical Paraphrase—
A Marseillaise Family *en Campagne*—A *Poste-à-Feu*
— Ideas of Happiness comparative—Illumination at
Nôtre Dame de la Garde—Bonfires.

Belle de Mai.

SINCE the commencement of the frightful disease by which we have been visited, I have found my greatest—indeed, almost my only, resource in my books. Many of them are of a somewhat melancholy tendency; and those have been by far the most congenial.

Do you remember an exquisite passage in "Bulwer's Student," in an article on human sympathy, commencing thus:—"My lost, my buried, my unforgotten! You, whom I knew in the first fresh years of life—you, who were snatched from me before one leaf of the summer

of youth and of love was withered—you, over whose grave, yet a boy, I wept away half the softness of my soul,—now that I know the eternal workings of the world, and the destiny of all human ties, I rejoice that you are no more !
* * * * * Death is the great treasure-house of love.”

You *must* remember it, for who could read such a passage, and not retain it ! I have ventured a paraphrase : here it is :—

THE EARLY DEAD.

Yes ! I can smile amid my tears,
To know that thou art gone,
In the fresh morning of thy years,
My lost, my buried one !
Gone, like a dream of life and light,
So beautiful and blest,
That though the morrow may be bright,
We love the darkness best.

Yes ! I can smile,—for as I muse
On all thou wert to me,
I deck thine image in the hues
Which none may wear but thee ;

Not one leaf of life's rose was dead,
When thy bright race was run;
No plume from youth's glad wing was shed—
My unforgotten one!

There was a time I wept such tears
As man ne'er sheds again;
And pour'd o'er thee in boyhood's years
Despair's own spirit-rain!
But now I joy that thou didst leave
Life's ruder paths untrod;
That I alone remain to grieve,
While thou art with thy God!

Yes! I can joy; for every thought
Of thee which, day by day,
Comes like the gleam at sunset caught,
Ere light has pass'd away,—
Wears no cold livery of earth,
With no false taint hath striven;
But shows the brightness of its birth,
And links my soul to heaven!

The world was not for thee: all things
Are false; and even time
Upon the treacherous spirit brings
A change, which grows to crime:
Who then would live through weary hours,
To see their hopes decay?
Not winter suns, nor summer flowers,
Can be more brief than they.

I too have changed ; the world hath wrought
Its chilling task on me ;
I am not, even in my thought,
What *I* was wont to be :
Thou only art a thing enshrin'd,
O'er which no change can come ;
The blessed link still left to bind
My spirit to its home !

All else is falsehood, weakness, guile,
Nor long the mask is worn ;
The lip that yesterday would smile,
To-day is wreathed with scorn :
Friends trusted most have fall'n away,
The kindly heart hath chang'd,
And those *I* lov'd the best—oh ! they
Have been the first estrang'd !

I know that thou art dead ; *I* gaze
Upon thy record-stone ;
I see it gilded by the rays
Of the declining sun :
Nor would *I* call thee back to life ;
Mine is a love too deep
To bid thee share this spirit-strife—
Sleep on, my lost one, sleep !

How *I* did love thee ! As the tide,
Which flows through golden mines,
Casts up the ore its sands might hide,
And while it wanders, shines :

So I to thee gave *all*,—the first
Deep tenderness, whose truth
Had been through years of silence nurst,—
The holy love of youth !

Beauty can ne'er again beguile,
I breathe no other vow ;
Why should my wrung heart wear a smile ?
I am a bankrupt now.
Life's tide still flows, but never more
'Twill take a golden stain ;
With thee was buried all the ore,
The sands alone remain !

Better that I should love thee thus,
A tenant of the tomb,
Than that the world had wrought for us
Its changeful web of gloom.
Fold then thy wings, my buried dove !
Beautiful be thy rest ;
"Death is the treasure-house of love ;"
My early lost ! my best !

We have already paid and received a few visits in the neighbourhood ; and certainly a Marseillaise family *en campagne*, does not exhibit particular advantage. The heat of the climate, and the extreme love of ease which it

induces, are not favourable to the graces; and thus the ladies indulge themselves in a thousand little slovenlinesses most revolting to an English eye; among which disordered hair and slip-shod feet are not the least inelegant.

I was much amused, a day or two ago, by a French gentleman, in whose grounds we were walking, inquiring of my uncle if he liked "*la chasse*?" You will believe that he replied in the negative, when I tell you in what description of "*chasse*" these good people delight. On each estate, upon the highest point of land within its limits, are planted two or three trees, to the topmost branches of each of which is affixed a leafless bough; and to this again are attached one or more sticks placed transversely. At a convenient distance from this vegetable "*Monos and Daimonos*," is erected a low stone, called a *poste-à-feu*, having loop-holes in the wall next the trees, and the roof generally overgrown by some creeping plant. Into these little dens *Messieurs les Chasseurs* creep; and there they remain in inglorious ease, firing from time

to time at the unhappy sparrows, or other "game," which happen to alight on the roosts prepared for them.

The taste for this amusement is so general here, that the fowling-pieces about the neighbourhood might frequently serve as minute-guns.

After all, our ideas of comfort and of amusement do not make us one whit happier than those of the people whom I am criticising. Happiness wears no regal robe; it laughs at the purple and fine linen of luxury; and can, no doubt, perfectly domesticate itself beside an ill-swept hearth. Certain, it is that the Marseillaise are eminently light-hearted; the pressure of danger and of disease is as yet but partially removed; and already the elastic spirits of all around me seem to have sprung back to their original altitude. It is a selfish, but a comfortable attribute; and yet, nevertheless, I do not envy them.

The word *sentiment* is frequently on the lips in this country; I know not if the quality be as

generally in the heart ; if so, it is “ folded up,” and undeveloped on the present occasion.

To-day is the Assumption of the Virgin Mary ; and Nôtre Dame de la Garde, whom, be it remarked *par parenthèse*, was sent home somewhat hurriedly to her eagle-nest on the rock, after a fortnight’s visit to the city, during which she failed to cure the cholera, which she was bound in common courtesy to have done, in return for the silver tunny-fish—Nôtre Dame de la Garde treated us last night to a flight of rockets, and a score of blazing tar-barrels ; while every family in the neighbourhood having a member named “ Mary,” which is here the most common of all designations, boasted its own bonfire.

In fact, we were all in a blaze for miles round, until the elements took their place in the pageant ; and a violent thunder-storm, accompanied by rain and lightning, soon extinguished our poor human attempts at an artificial day ; and the forked flashes ran shimmering along the sky like golden serpents, blinding us with “ excess of light.”

Farewell ! I fear that I have overpassed your patience with this long epistle ; and will only further lengthen it by the assurance of my perfect and unfailing affection.

LETTER XX.

Increase of the Disease—The Signal-Tower—Welcome
News—Self-deception.

Belle de Mai, Aug. 19th.

No! I cannot yet reply as I would fain do to your anxious affection,—we are still vacillating between hope and fear: the disease varies in its virulence from day to day; and we have scarcely congratulated each other on its partial extinction, when on the morrow, like a fire on which fresh fuel has been cast, it blazes forth once more with renewed vigour.

The plague-flag continues to fly each evening from the towers of Nôtre Dame de la Garde; and eagerly is every glass turned in that direction, to ascertain the number of the signal. We are about to make one more attempt to escape: the mind, thus kept constantly on the stretch,

and as constantly flung back upon itself, does not fail to exercise a most injurious effect on the health; and we feel the imperative necessity which begins to exist of change of scene.

We have long intended to visit Grenoble, and are inclined to do so at the present crisis; I shall therefore probably address my next letter to you from that city.

Your despatch, which I received in all safety yesterday, afforded me unspeakable delight,—it was indeed as “the voice of one crying in the wilderness,”—an earnest of good tidings; and I sympathize with you most heartily.

— is wrong: as well may the Alchymist endeavour, in impotent disdain of the immutable laws of nature, to call up the precious metal from a combination of the baser; as man to erect a superstructure of happiness on a foundation of error. As to what you tell me of his present passion, it is too absurd. Has he forgotten the sentiment of the old Scottish ballad, which says that

“ It is well to be off wi’ the auld luvie,
Before you are on wi’ the new !”

His heart must resemble a peach-stone ; indented on all sides, and perforated no where.

Congratulate —— most sincerely for me on the success of his late work. I esteem the man even more than I admire the author ; and were my opinion worthy of the slightest weight, this would be no niggard praise.

* * * * *

Once more, farewell : ere long I hope to write to you from beyond the Alps.

LETTER XXI.

AN Alpine Journey—Castle and Village of Marargue—
Sisteron—Mountain Torrents—Halt at Manoscq—
Perilous Position—Alpine Scenery—The Durance—
Rock-Parasites.

CONGRATULATE me! I have escaped for awhile from the neighbourhood of the pestilence; and congratulate me no less that I have arrived here in safety, after the most dangerous journey which I ever undertook.

You may remember how continuous and how violent had been the storms for many days before our departure from Marseilles; and you will not consequently be surprised to learn that a more perilous moment could not have been selected for our Alpine journey.

Every torrent was at its height, pouring down “fast and furious” from the mountains; and many had formed pigmy lakes in the low

lands: the roads were in several directions completely carried away; and in others rendered impassable by the huge stones flung by the torrents from the rocks which overhang them. In short, although we saw every thing *en superbe*, we nevertheless paid a heavy price for the sublime, in the danger which we incurred; and had the object of our journey been any thing less than a pilgrimage to La Grande Chartreuse, we should probably not have persisted while the bad weather continued, or at least have chosen a less difficult road.

On arriving at Aix, we diverged from the Paris route, having determined to reach Grenoble by Gap; and the first object worthy of notice was the little village of Marargue, clustered round the base of a lofty rock, that on the side by which we approached it, was almost perpendicular, and crowned by a stately castle with its tall turrets, and its encircling ramparts—a very eagle's nest.

The road that led to this little feudal hamlet, which had evidently owed its origin to the

vicinity of the proud pile that over-shadowed it, and been peopled by the retainers and dependents of its lord, was romantic to excess; cut through the gorge of the mountain, which in some places so thoroughly shut it in that further progress appeared impossible; while every spot on which the soil washed from the heights had collected in sufficient quantity to afford subsistence and shelter to their roots, almond and olive trees gave variety to the scene; and huge gourds spread their large leaves and yellow fruit along the earth.

Towards evening we reached Sisteron: a miserable little town; remarkable only as one of the halting-places of Napoleon after his escape from Elba.

Our road had been, meanwhile, gradually becoming more wild and difficult; and as the darkness gathered about us, and the noise of the many torrents, which, rushing down the sides of the mountains, encumbered our path with the detached masses that had been unable to resist the violence of the descending waters, fell more

distinctly on our ears ; I confess that there were moments when I wished myself in a less perilous situation.

A heavy storm came on just as we arrived at the small town of Manosq ; where we remained, in a desolate-looking post-house, until it had passed by, ere we continued our pilgrimage. It would have been better for us had we deferred it until the morning ; for the night had set in dark and wild ; and although the rain had ceased, a strong wind added to the impetuosity of the falling waters ; and we occasionally heard huge stones come rattling down the rocks, and fall with a heavy plash into the stream which ran brawling along at their base.

The road, never, as we afterwards learnt, considered safe, was now imminently dangerous ; and we had travelled for a time at a foot's pace, when suddenly the postillion declared that he had lost the track, and was afraid to proceed ; lest he should precipitate us into the torrent which was boiling and bounding immediately beside us.

After much trouble and considerable delay,

the road was found, and the carriage turned once more into the proper track; but in about half an hour we reached a spot where every vestige of a highway was completely obliterated by the immense volume of water which had poured down the side of the mountain, and brought with it a perfect avalanche of stones.

Among these detached and fallen masses we soon became imprisoned. In vain did the postilion by turns coax and flog; in vain did the poor horses put forth all their strength,—we were fairly at a stand-still; with the additional enjoyment of a fresh storm of rain rattling against the windows, and the torrent driving against the wheels.

A passage was at length, with much labour, effected by the removal of the largest masses that obstructed the way; and in less than an hour we were once more *en route*; but ere we saw the day dawn, we were lost on two more occasions, and with difficulty recovered our road. I do not think that I ever in my life hailed more heartily the cold grey light of morning.

Had the darkness lasted two hours longer, we

must inevitably have been lost ; for within that period, we came to a spot where the road runs along the edge of a sheer precipice of about a hundred feet in depth ; where all passage was cut off by the complete demolition of the artificial embankment upon which it had been constructed ; and for a space of five or six yards had been entirely washed down into the gulph, by a torrent that had formed a channel of many feet in width.

Up the bed of this furious mountain-stream the carriage was with difficulty dragged, until we had gained a sufficient elevation to render it practicable for us to ascend a bank, which formed the boundary of a piece of ploughed land ; reclaimed, as are many similar patches in this mountainous part of the country, from the rock ; and rendered available for the purposes of agriculture by the quantity of soil deposited there by accident, and the decomposition of the various rock-parasites.

From this bank we descended into the field, where the horses were instantly buried in mud up to their girths ; and remained for some time immovable ; thence, in order to regain the road,

we were compelled to drive down a frightful declivity ; but before attempting this feat, the windows of the carriage were lowered, that in the event of an overturn, which we quite anticipated, we might not incur a collision with the broken glass. This danger we, however, providentially escaped ; and were fairly *quittes pour la peur*.

I cannot describe to you the wild and sublime beauty of the scenery through which we travelled during the entire day. For several leagues the Durance flowed far beneath us on one side, while on the other, the chain of the Lower Alps, towered into the sky ; and sufficient space had with difficulty, and not without the evidence of considerable skill, been obtained for the formation of a road, in few places wide enough for three carriages to travel abreast.

As we drove along this ledge, I was struck by the insignificance of the river ; which, notwithstanding that the late storms had poured into its channel a thousand tributary torrents, frittered away its waters in a score of pigmy streams ; leaving numerous islands of mud and sand to

dispute the vast bed, which it has from time to time worn away. This most wayward of rivers is, however, rendered very dangerous by the fact, that without any apparent cause, it at times overflows its banks, and rolls along with an impetuous violence which sweeps away every obstacle ; while during intervals of storm, such as that in which I looked on it, a pebble almost suffices to turn aside its current.

The sides of the rocks along which we travelled, were clothed with vegetation ; the dwarf oak, the broad-leafed myrtle, the yellow fox-glove, and the clematis, abounded ; while the caper-plant, whose graceful blossom so much resembles the passion-flower, was not the least conspicuous.

LETTER XXII.

Precipitous Road — Mountain Plain — Château de Vitroule — Château Talar — New Post-House — Quince Trees — Town of Gap — Avenue of Poplars — Ancient Cathedral — Fine Painting — Strong Contrast — Mountain View — Glimpse of Mont Blanc — Valley of Vezille — Château of Casimir Perier — Approach to Grenoble — Rock-Fortress — Pleasant Anticipations.

THE interesting, but perilous road which I described in my last, was abruptly terminated by a suspension-bridge flung across the river ; and we had scarcely crossed it, ere we began to descend such sudden and frightful declivities, that even with the wheel of the carriage locked, the horses constantly broke into a gallop ; a circumstance especially uncomfortable, when, as was frequently the case, the road made a sharp turn, and we saw nothing before us but a yawning precipice, unprotected even by a railing, and down which the waters of a torrent were tumbling headlong, with a noise like thunder.

It is a singular and not very creditable fact, that the whole of this road, hewn as it is in the midst of dangers and difficulties, and where accidents are of constant occurrence, is left unguarded; without the slightest effort having been made to increase its safety. It is certain that there are some spots where human forethought and prevention could avail nothing, as any barrier would be carried away by the first rush of the torrent; but it is nevertheless true, that there are many now extremely dangerous, which, at the cost of a little time and labour, might be rendered comparatively safe.

Can you not believe how gratified I was on breakfasting for the first time in the Hautes Alpes? I shall never forget the sensation with which, after mounting a long and steep ascent, I looked around me. Far, far below us ran the road by which we had travelled—now lost in the depth of one of the abrupt hollows that I have just mentioned; now dizzily overhanging the precipice around which it wound.

We were in the midst of a wide and fertile plain, completely shut in by rocks of stupen-

dous height ; some perfectly barren, and others completely feathered, even to their summits, with spruce—fields of wheat and millet—fruit trees of various descriptions—groupes of firs—and gushing rills of water pouring from the mountains. It was a scene of enchantment !

In this beautiful seclusion stands the magnificent château of the Baron de Vitroule, who was ambassador at Florence during the reign of Charles X. It is an immense pile of building, in good taste, and extremely well kept ; surrounded by stately terraces, and almost buried in wood.

At about two leagues distance, on the edge of the same plain, the Château de Talar, the property of the Count de Noé, rises on the right hand. Vast, sombre, and feudal-looking, it is a noble feature in the landscape, standing as it does in the gorge of two mighty mountains ; while behind its tall turrets, Alp towers above Alp, until the summit of the loftiest and most distant is lost in the deep purple of the horizon.

At the termination of the plain, a fine post-

house has been recently erected, which looks *almost* English. It possesses a delicious fountain, into whose basin the sparkling rock-water is poured through four lions' mouths; while the overflowing of the stream forms a lovely cascade on the opposite side of the road, and serves to irrigate an extensive pear-orchard, which, at the period of our visit, was golden with fruit. The hedge that enclosed it was formed entirely of quince trees; of which I afterwards remarked an immense number, generally applied to the same purpose; the huge fruit hanging in almost countless numbers over the road.

The little town of Gap, the capital of the Higher Alps, is approached by an avenue of poplars, extending at least a league: some of the trees are of considerable height and age, but most of them are small, having been recently planted to replace such as have, from time to time, been blown away; a fate in which, judging from the blasts that came sweeping along the mountain as we were passing, and bending their slender stems almost to the earth as they whistled over them, they are very likely to participate.

Gap, like almost every town in France, possesses a fine barrack, generally well filled; but it also boasts a very ancient cathedral, wherein I remarked a handsomely-proportioned Chapter-House, containing eight sarcophagi, and a centre tomb of great antiquity.

In this cathedral I also saw the most exquisite painting which I ever remember to have looked upon. It was a Madonna—the head slightly declined, and the rich hair bound smoothly upon the brow with a silken fillet; in the energy of prayer the fillet has become slackened, and one long tress has escaped from beneath the modest head-gear; every feature is perfect, and the draperies of the most beautiful transparency. The picture is evidently ancient, and as palpably undervalued; being hung in a false light, and in an inconsequent situation. I failed in my attempt to learn the name of the artist. It had all the grace of Albano, and all the truth of Titian.

As I glanced towards the wooden image, clad in silver tissue, which surmounts an altar not twenty paces removed from this exquisite

painting, I could scarcely bring myself to believe that the same cause had engendered such opposite effects !

On leaving Gap we commenced the ascent of a mountain, and were precisely three hours in gaining the summit, from whence we looked down upon the town, which is built in a perfect basin, shut in on all sides by lofty rocks ; and being roofed entirely with grey slate, it has just the appearance of a Scottish *cairn*, of which the barrack forms the largest stone. The effect is altogether singular.

Far to the left stretched the chain of mountains, at whose base the Durance flowed in the direction of Embrun ; while in the extreme distance, the summits of a cluster of snow-covered heights gleamed out cold and clear on the blue sky.

Each league that we travelled, new beauties burst upon us. We caught one glimpse of "the monarch of mountains," and but one ; for a group of rocks intervened, whose fantastic outline and nearer neighbourhood claimed and absorbed all our attention.

In a few hours we approached almost to the foot of the snow-created giants we had long seen from afar off; and it was truly a magnificent spectacle! The one nearest to us was a dark mass, shaped like an inverted cone, and girdled halfway up by a dense wreath of white vapour; this was backed by a calcareous rock, whose jagged peaks were thickly covered with snow; and which was, in its turn, overtopped by a stately mountain that had taken a tint of the richest purple, and about whose clefts clung masses of heavy vapour, as white as the snow above them.

The valley that lay at their feet, was one stretch of fresh, bright green, scattered over with villages; and profusely irrigated by the clear streams flowing down the sides of the mountains.

Along the chain, of which this stately group formed the highest point, we were yet progressing as evening closed upon us; and when the grey dawn once more broke over the world, we were rapidly descending the steep and picturesque road which seemed rather to cling against,

than to belong to, the lofty rocks that overhang the beautiful valley and town of Vizille; with the silver Drac flowing through the dense vegetation like a thread of light, and its banks fringed with trees; affording, perhaps, as perfect an idea of Arcadia, as one is likely to meet with in this common-place world.

The stately château of the late M. Casimir Perier is the most striking object in the landscape; and it is easy to perceive that the little town of Vizille owes its origin to the vicinity of its prouder neighbour. The style of the building is the simple gothic; and it is said to be the finest castle in the department.

We approached Grenoble by an avenue of walnut trees; and entered the city by the Porte de Bonne. The first thing which strikes a stranger is the immense strength and extent of a newly-erected fortress, covering the entire crest of a rock overhanging the town on the N. E. New and handsome ramparts are also in progress, to supersede the mouldering remains of the very ancient works by which Grenoble has been hitherto surrounded; they are flung much

further from the town than the original wall, and are very strongly constructed; but they would avail little in the event of any popular commotion tending to effect a schism between the throne and the people, as the fortress on the height is garrisoned with the king's troops; and the entire city might be raked in an hour from so commanding a situation.

Why has modern taste corrupted the fine harmonious designation of Gratianopolis, given to the city by the Emperor Gratien, into Grenoble? The alteration is by no means an improvement; but I believe it to exist in the fact, that our forefathers, who bestowed years on a mosaic pavement, or a tapestry hanging, could afford time for the utterance of a word, which we of the nineteenth century are far too busy to articulate.

Our hotel is extremely comfortable, in a handsome and quiet street; and when I shall have "shaken the dust from my feet," and overcome in some degree the extreme fatigue of my journey, I anticipate a pleasant stroll with my uncle through this very pretty town.

What shall I say of my letter? Is it not worse than the "Times" after an adjourned debate? I fear that it will prove a species of caligraphical concentration of morphine. Should it indeed be so, may your dreams be pleasant; and may I have a place in them.

LETTER XXIII.

Town of Grenoble—Fountains—Hôtel de Ville—The Cathedral—Statue of Bayard—The Perishable and the Imperishable—Public Promenade—Garden of the Prefecture—Ecole Polytechnique—Library—Museum—Manuscripts—Bec-Figues.

Grenoble.

I LIKE Grenoble much! My presentiment has not deceived me. I like its clean, wide, wholesome streets; and its well-proportioned square, where the wind comes lovingly down from the mountains uncontaminated with a single taint, and free from all those vile odours which are the common characteristic of southern towns. All around is animation. At one moment we encounter the brass band of a regiment, traversing the streets to its exercise-ground; and at another our ears are saluted by the drums of a second, relieving guard at the several outposts, or mustering on the ramparts.

I have been particularly struck by the beauty of the fountains. That of the Place Grenette, the handsomest square in the city, is known by the name of the Château d'Eau. A triple stage of marble basins, of which the centre one is formed from a single block of sassénage stone, nine feet in diameter, are overflowed by fine sheets of water; while the *jet d'eau* on their summit flings up a slender stream, glittering like a column of crystal, twenty feet into the air. Four cupids, mounted on dolphins, and sporting with garlands, occupy the lip of the lower reservoir; and altogether the effect is admirable.

In the Place de la Cathédrale, a Corinthian column surmounted by a globe, rises from the centre of a basin, which is filled from the mouths of four colossal swans in bronze, so admirably executed, that you almost expect to see them spring towards you; while in the Place St. Louis is another fountain decorated with an obelisk, supported by four spheres, boldly and finely executed.

The Hôtel de Ville is very ancient, and was

formerly the Hôtel de Lesdignières. It is a spacious edifice, but of irregular architecture. Its gardens and courts are much frequented as a promenade; and many of the chesnut trees are of such an unusual size, as to be considered curiosities. The largest of the whole is known as the Maronnier de Lesdignières.

The cathedral is built in on all sides, and is unattractive from the street; but its interior is very striking. A look of great antiquity combines, with its "dim religious light," and its elaborately-carved stalls, and pulpit of dark oak, to impress the mind with a feeling of solemnity; which its range of inferior naves, surrounding the body of the church, tends greatly to augment, from the gloom that they create.

Near the cathedral, on a stone pedestal, inscribed with the names of his companions in arms, and those of the conflicts in which he shared; stands a colossal statue, in bronze, of Bayard; the *Chevalier sans peur et sans reproche*. He is represented as wounded; leaning against the trunk of a tree, with his good sword reversed in his hand, and his plumed helmet at

his feet. The effect of the whole is imposing; but there is a want of grace about the figure that destroys much of its beauty.

How often in this life are the sublime and the ridiculous, the very oil and water of existence, brought into collision, and forced into an unnatural companionship. The zeal of modern loyalty has here placed in the hand of Bayard—in the same hand which holds his trusty weapon—a slight staff, to which is, or rather has been appended, a small tri-coloured flag. The mountain blasts have partially rent away the frail banner; and the everlasting metal is coupled with a paltry rag, that shivers in every breath of wind!

A considerable portion of the town has been rebuilt within the last few years. The new streets are, generally speaking, very handsome; and the houses being uniformly constructed throughout their whole length, and adorned with wrought-iron balconies, partially gilt, have a very cheerful appearance.

The fortress to which I alluded in my last letter is called the Bastille, and is situated on

a height, from which it could sweep the whole city; it is far more extensive than the original fort, and is composed of several ranges of casemates and batteries, covering a lesser height, only separated from the mountain by which it is backed, by deep and extensive trenches.

The ascent is difficult and fatiguing: but the lover of nature is well repaid for the effort which is necessary to climb the hill, by the glorious view that is thence obtained of the city and its suburbs. He has the whole valley of Graisivaudan, in which Grenoble is seated, spread out beneath him: the town is at his feet; the serpentine meanderings of the rival rivers, Isère and Drac, give life and light to a fertile and beautiful landscape, ere their junction takes place a little above the city; and in every direction groupes of superb mountains tower into the sky, many of them crowned with snow. La Chalanche, with its jagged and glittering outline, challenges the attention for a time; while the stately Mont Blanc, overtopping every other object, rises majestically in the distance, and rivets it in wondering awe!

The public promenade attached to the Hôtel de la Préfecture, is delightfully situate, being separated from the river Isère only by the little Quai d'Orleans. The trees which overshadow it are large and stately, and when lighted up with lamps, make a miniature Vauxhall. The garden of the Préfecture on which the walk touches, is gay with a thousand flowers; and although small, is well laid out, and surrounded by a raised terrace adorned with a double row of orange trees.

The public library is rich in rare and choice MSS., many of which formerly belonged to the Monastery of the Chartreuse. It contains 60,000 volumes, principally of great scarcity and value; and occupies the second floor of the building in which are the Halls of the Polytechnic school. When we visited it, we turned aside to glance at the prize drawings of the pupils, which were then exhibiting; they were tolerably numerous, but contained little inducement to delay; and we accordingly ascended at once to the library.

It is entered through a small ante-room,

containing a very ancient group in marble of Athenian origin, which originally covered a tomb, but was subsequently converted by the Turks into the face of a fountain. Ranged round the room, on small brackets, were a set of well-executed busts in bronze; and at the upper end an antique bronze entablature of great beauty.

The library is very plainly lined with mahogany, and furnished with a projecting gallery throughout its whole extent, which is very limited. A magnificent head of Cuvier occupies a conspicuous station in the principal apartment, with a bust of Louis Philippe as its *pendant*.

At the upper end of the room is a superb MS. case, made by the Carthusian monks from the root of the olive tree which formerly ornamented their own library; and near the entrance is a table, on which stands a curious model of the Bastille.

A small, but interesting picture-gallery opens from the library, where we remarked several fine paintings by Rubens, Domenichino, and others of the old masters; particularly a lovely head of the Virgin by Carlo Dolce, and a

“Christ recognised at the breaking of bread,” by far the most striking production in the collection.

One apartment of the establishment is converted into a museum, in which we found some half-score of stuffed birds and beasts : among the rest a very large bear and her three cubs, from the Carthusian Desarts ; and a fine collection of minerals and heliotropes. The minerals have been principally obtained from the Alps ; but those procured in the Desarts of the Carthusians are many of them of great beauty and value, being strongly impregnated with gold and silver.

Every facility is afforded for study ; and the librarian, M. Ducoin, is extremely polite and “long-suffering ;” not sparing any personal exertion to assist the curious or the studious in their researches.

The collection of illuminated MSS. is highly interesting, from the elaboration and richness of many of the number : among others, they possess a missal of the commencement of the sixteenth century, embellished with miniature medallions

entirely round each page; the heads of the several saints are finished with the nicety of a work on ivory; while not less than a score of the pages are occupied entirely by groupings of figures, such as the Holy Family, Hagar and Ishmael, and the Sacrifice of Abraham, all painted in the same careful and elaborate manner.

Of almost equal beauty, of similar precision, but in quite a different style, is a vellum MS. of the fifteenth century: also a missal, in which the margin is illuminated with wreaths of flowers of the most minute dimensions. Many of the roses might be covered by the head of a common-sized pin, and yet the painting of the flower is perfect. It looks as though it had been executed with a single hair! Each chapter is headed by the miniature figure of a saint, with accessories of consistent minuteness.

We saw also a splendid quarto Bible, with illuminated capitals, the work of a single hand.

But the most valuable MS. which they showed to us, was that of the Poems of Charles of Orleans, father of Louis XII.; written from his dictation by his secretary Antoine l'Astesan, in

the fourteenth century. This volume has not been long returned from Paris, having been lent to the *Bibliothèque Royale*, for the purpose of being copied.

We loitered away a couple of hours very pleasantly over these precious exemplars of the patience and ingenuity of buried ages; and then taking leave *sans adieu* of M. Ducoin, to whom we speedily purposed to pay a second visit, we returned to our hotel; where I am now scribbling this, while my uncle is making arrangements for to-morrow's pilgrimage to La Grande Chartreuse.

I scarcely dare to ask myself what I anticipate; for I have so long wished to visit the Carthusian Desert, that I have drawn splendid mental pictures of all that I am to hear, to see, and, above all, to *feel*,—and how seldom do the realities of life equal the colourings of the imagination!

When I shall have flung away the scrip and the staff, I shall perhaps look back with regret upon the departed delusions of my own enthusiastic fancy.

Tell ——, to whom the subject will, I know, be matter of surpassing interest, that he had better pack his portmanteau, and start at once to Grenoble, merely to partake of the delicate little *bec-figues*, or fig-eaters, which can be obtained only two months in the year, during the season of the fruit. We never dine without them.

As I find that I have actually digressed from antiquities to gastronomy, it is quite time that I should close my letter. Think of me often : I know that you will do so kindly.

LETTER XXIV.

Midnight in the Desart—The Convent-bell—Character of the Scenery—Pilgrimage through the Desart—Sun-rise on the Isère—Country between Grenoble and Voreppe—Situation of Voreppe—Desarts of the Grande Chartreuse—Road from Voreppe to St. Laurent-du-Pont.

The Carthusian Desart.

Midnight.

AM I indeed on earth? Am I still a denizen of the busy, bustling, business-teeming world? Yet a member of that social system which is continually revolutionized by human passions, and human crime? In a world of ambition, prejudice, and vice?

It is difficult to believe that such can really be the case.

The moon rides high in heaven; and by her light I can trace the outline of the eternal rocks which form the boundary of the desart. The night-wind is sighing over the stately pines that

clothe their sides—the growth of centuries. The fountain beneath my window is pouring forth its waters with calm and monotonous regularity; serving, like the sand of the hour-glass, to mark the passing away of moments which can return no more. But save these sounds all is stillness; and these seem to deepen rather than to disturb the quiet.

And now a bell rings out its silvery peal on the night-air! The Fathers of the Desert leave their humble pallets to offer up their midnight orisons:—the bell ceases, and all is again still.

Yes! in the midst of the Carthusian desert—in the heart of those stately mountains which were deemed inaccessible, until the venturous zeal of self-sacrificing and humble piety had explored their hidden recesses—among the far-spreading forests where the bear leads forth her cubs beneath the shadows of the giant firs which, springing from the abyss that forms a bed for the torrent boiling and foaming from the rocks, seem to lose themselves in the sky,—it is, indeed, that Religion has found a shrine worthy of her,—all is stupendous, still, sublime; no

burst of human passion, nor of human mirth pollutes the echoes,—no images, save those of solitude, and penitence, and calm, are presented to the imagination. The very sunshine falls scantily upon the Cenobites of the Chartreuse, and their summers are brief and ungenial; while the mountains which encircle their retreat attract the storms and rains of a prolonged and cheerless winter.

If you can picture to yourself what the earth might have been when first called out of chaos, ere the Almighty hand had reduced it into order; you will have a mental glimpse of the Carthusian Desert. Mighty rocks, clothed with pines, and crowned with snow, towering into the sky, and girdled midway with clouds,—thundering torrents, fed by a thousand rushing cataracts, roaring and bellowing through their caverned channels,—the distant growl of the bear from her mountain-fastness,—the howl of the wolf from the depths of the impenetrable forest. Is not this a fitting sketch for Salvator Rosa?

But my enthusiasm has caused me to anticipate; for although our pilgrimage was not

“palmiferous,” you will, nevertheless, expect some account of it, such as it was.

We left Grenoble at five o'clock in the morning, in a carriage drawn by two stout mules. The sun was just rising, and flinging a flood of golden light on the clear waters of the Isère, as we crossed the bridge, and issued from the town by the Porte de France. The road lies along the base of a chain of mountains, some barren and calcareous, others rich and cultivated ; and is bordered by chesnut and walnut trees. The valley through which we passed is so fertile, that the land produces three crops of grass yearly ; and wheat, millet, hemp, and flax, together with a variety of fruit-trees, are to be seen on all sides in the greatest profusion and perfection ; the deep light soil being composed of the deposits of the Isère, which has gradually abandoned the mountains whose base it once washed, to flow deeper in the valley, at the foot of the steep rocks which shut it in on the south side ; and which render its channel tortuous and irregular by their fantastic outline.

As we proceeded along this lovely road, we

were met by groupes of peasants hurrying to the city, bearing on their heads wicker trays of grapes, from which the rich fruit depended on all sides ; and carrying upon their arms baskets containing the soft white cheese made from the milk of sheep. I remarked several among them (all women) who were afflicted with wens : and instantly remembered my vicinity to the land of the *orétin*.

The vines, which along the whole line of road were trellised, or trained from tree to tree, were in many places blown down by the late storms ; and one fine walnut tree, which had evidently braved the tempests of years, was rent to the very roots,—the thunder had smitten it, and its leaves were withering on the earth.

The little town, or rather village of Voreppe, is interesting only from the fact, that, here the wanderer, who meditates a pilgrimage to the desert-shrine of St. Bruno, quits the main road to enter upon the narrow and difficult northward path leading to the Grande Chartreuse ; the Monastery being situated in the north-easterly portion of the department of the Isère,

once a part of the ancient Dauphiné, and between five and six leagues distant from Grenoble.

The streets of Voreppe are narrow, and the roofs of many of the houses project far across them. The situation is very picturesque, being a slender gorge of the mountain, at the bottom of which flows the river. The valley is closed in by high calcareous rocks, and is fertile and agreeable.

Perhaps it would be difficult to find or to imagine a more beautiful landscape than that which lies on your left hand, about a hundred paces beyond the bridge over the Isère. Had the trees been planted, or the houses grouped for the express purpose of producing a fine scenic effect, the intention could not have been more fully accomplished. In the depth of the valley a torrent rushes foaming over its rocky bed; upon its banks a village spire, and the roofs of the scattered cottages peep out here and there from among the clusters of chesnut trees, which form the staple wealth of the neighbourhood. The enormous pyramidal rock, at whose base these

dwelling nestle, is succeeded by lofty hills, cultivated to their summits: while in the distance, a rock of great extent, crowned with lofty firs; and the peaks of several high mountains, seem to beckon you onward, and to give a fresh impetus to your curiosity.

We were fortunate in the moment of our visit; for the torrent, swollen by the late storms, was boiling and leaping over its stony and precipitous bed, with a noise and hurry which formed the happiest contrast to the fertility and quiet of the surrounding objects.

The Desart of the Grande Chartreuse is situated in a narrow valley, formed between two lofty and steep mountains by a rapid torrent, called the Guyer-mort, to distinguish it from another torrent with which it afterwards forms a junction, called the Guyer-vif, serving as the frontier between France and Savoy. The valley is entirely covered with wood, pasturage, and almost inaccessible rocks; and is closed at its extremities by precipices which were long considered impracticable; but where human perseverance has, with much art and labour, succeeded

in effecting a passage along the bank of the torrent.

On quitting Voreppe the road commences by an abrupt ascent, and is stony and difficult; cut at the base of a well-wooded mountain, and overlooking the valley through which flows the winding Isère, with its banks dotted with pretty country-houses. On reaching the summit of the hill above the village, and from thence to St. Laurent-du-Pont, the road becomes better; save that it is in many places crossed by the streams of water which descend from the mountains in considerable volume; and are frequently of sufficient depth to have rendered a bridge, not only pleasant, but even necessary. Bridge, however, there is none; and accordingly our mules splashed through, and threw up no trifling portion of the sparkling rock-water into the carriage.

The country through which we journeyed for the next two leagues was well shaded, undulating, and highly cultivated; the road being in many parts bordered by handsome trees,—ash, walnut, oak, maple, and fruit-trees covered

with produce. Occasionally it was enclosed by hedges; sometimes following the course of a brawling brook; and at others running along the edge of fields of millet and Indian corn: while still the mighty and majestic Alps shut in the landscape; and towered into the sky, bathing their lofty peaks in the blue ether.

LETTER XXV.

Sublime Landscape—Church of St. Laurent-du-Pont—
Entrance of the Desart—A Mountain-hamlet—Plain
Women—Village Inn—Entrance of the Gorge—Iron
Foundery.

NEXT to the grandeur of the mountain-heights, the most attractive object was the infinite variety of forest trees, and their picturesque grouping.

At the base of the chain, mingling their pleasant and graceful verdure with that of the corn-crops and orchards, growing in the quiet valley, and nourished by the clear streams which irrigate it, were clusters of ash trees, weeping birches, aspens, and willows; overtopping these, the more vigorous and broader-leaved maple, elm, and oak, with here and there a tall poplar lancing its leafy head into the heavens, formed the next gradation; while these were in their turn dominated by the stately firs, whose long, dark, motionless arms, all pointing upwards, seemed to have no

common interest with the earth from which they sprang. The gayer and more fragile trees beneath them change with the changing season, but these yield not either to the summer sun, or the winter's snow : like the rocks to which they cling, they know no apparent change. They are the very children of the Desart ; stern, dark, and still.

Nor must I pass over without remark the stately flight of an eagle, which we saw in the distance rise from its Alpine eyrie, and soar majestically towards the sun ; while close beside us, sheltered among the branches of the fruit and forest trees, a myriad of singing-birds were pouring forth their sweet notes ; making the air vocal, and the spirit glad.

The mountains towards which we were gradually approaching, are a ramification of that branch of the Alps, which, leaning on one side on Mont-Blanc, and on the other on the mountains of Viso and Genève, enclose within their narrow gorge the waters both of the Drac and the Isère ; and which gradually descending in their course, and diminishing in their outline, finally terminate on the banks of the Rhône.

Mont-Cenis, towering far in the distance is visible through the entrance of the gorge ; and gives a last touch to the sublimity of the landscape.

On reaching a cluster of houses belonging to, but detached from the main village of St. Laurent-du-Pont, although the whole extent of the valley was yet visible on the right-hand, the precipitous rock to which we had been rapidly approximating seemed to close the passage not more than a hundred yards in front of us, and to deny a further approach ; the sounds of human life and human avocations reached us, but every glimpse of the hamlet was shut out.

Before us, a narrow opening appeared in the chain of mountains along which we had travelled ; and we at once felt that this must be the entrance to the Desart. Two lofty rocks, which appear as though they had formerly composed but one mass, and had been riven by some fearful convulsion of nature, now form a bed at their base for a rapid and echoing torrent ; which escaping, after awhile from its rocky and contracted channel, flows more calmly and peacefully through the village.

St. Laurent-du-Pont is a straggling and picturesque hamlet, without one symptom of that squalid poverty so general in the French villages. No tattered mendicant raises his hat to your carriage-window,—no wailing tone of misery falls upon your ear. After passing the cluster of houses just named, you turn an abrupt angle of the rock ; and to your left, a little removed from the road, you see a new and modest-looking church, with a few cottages grouped about it. Above it towers a mountain covered with firs ; while a torrent, weary of tumbling over its stony bed, here separates into several narrow and sparkling streamlets, washing the low wall of the little church-yard ; and a few tall poplars tremble over the unlettered graves.

Another half-mile brings you to the main village, consisting of two or three better-built, and more regular streets. The houses have projecting roofs, and in many instances exterior staircases, which give them much the appearance of the chalets of Switzerland.

The younger females were tending their pigs and goats in the fields, and spinning from their

distaffs ; the elder ones were combing flax, or twirling their wheels at the cottage doors. All wore the close skull-cap of dark cotton, frilled with black lace, which I had already remarked to be so common in the Alps. Not one pretty woman did I see, although I looked anxiously in every face ; the mountain air is evidently not congenial to female beauty.

There was something thrilling in the remark made by each individual who glanced at us as we passed ; even the very children who were sporting round the cottage doors lisped out, as they looked on us with the vague curiosity of infancy,—“ They are going to the Desart ! ” Strangers can have but one aim in traversing this Alpine hamlet.

The hotel (for by this pompous title is designated the clean but humble *auberge* in which we breakfasted) overlooks the little square of the village ; and here we were supplied with mountain-trout and sassenage, which proved very acceptable after our journey. Here, too, we quitted our carriage, and hired a guide with mules, to enable us to continue our rugged and difficult way.

The road, on issuing from the village, lay beneath an almost perpendicular rock, that in many spots overhung the path ; and from which the oozing waters distilled in large and frequent drops upon our heads ; or rushed down in rapid streams, that, after traversing the road, lost themselves in the bed of the torrent which was boiling and brawling far beneath us.

At the entrance of the gorge an iron-foundery adds to the deafening roar of the mountain-stream, which is forced down an abrupt and artificial fall, in order to turn the wheels of the machinery, and there forms a cascade of nine or ten feet in depth ; but the numerous iron-works which once sent their voice of uproar far into the recesses of the Desert, have disappeared ; and this solitary establishment alone remains.

LETTER XXVI:

Torrent of the Guyer-Mort—Alpine Cataract—Rustic Fountain—Method of transporting Timber—Pedestrian Privileges—Warning-Bell.

NOTHING can be more various than the outline of the mountain-chain, whose base affords a fantastic and fitting channel for the rushing torrent of the Guyer-mort. At one moment the foaming waters are lost beneath the shelving and calcareous masses of a peaked rock, which is unconscious of the slightest vegetation ; in the next they take a dark stain from the decomposed slate of another, which, yielding to the action of the atmospheric air, has peeled away, and fallen into the bed of the cataract ; and walking a few paces onward, we seemed to stand at the portal of a cathedral ; and to look far into its dim aisle, through a long line of arches which

are finally commingled in the distance ; or lost in the boiling and bellowing of the torrent.

A sudden turn in the road, necessitated by the formation of the mountain, at the moment that we had reached the brink of a precipice, appeared to be leading us back to the village ; when, by an unexpected zig-zag, we were rapidly brought to the greatest height which we had yet attained.

And here I feel the total inadequacy of words to bring before your imagination the grandeur, the sublimity, and the majesty of the scene on which we looked ! I am half tempted to throw down my pen, and abandon the attempt. How can I hope to paint objects so stupendous and magnificent, that I was unable to gaze around me without a thrilling awe, that for a time compelled me rather to worship than to remark ?

If ever the Eternal Creator of this most glorious world did really impress the sublimity and mightiness of His visible presence upon any of His works, it must surely have been in the depths of the Carthusian deserts ; amid the rushing of waters,—the reverberating thun-

ders of the cloud-crested rocks,—the silent solitudes of the uninvaded forests.

Let the Atheist come here, and tremble! He may approach with scoffing upon his lip; but, ere he turn away, he will have raised a shrine within his heart to the God of Nature and of Love!

Before us we beheld the most beautiful cascade of the Desart. It rushes with the sound of thunder from the summits of the mighty rocks, of which the aching eye can with difficulty scale the height; and plunges downward beside your very path into the depth of the valley, as it escapes from beneath a bridge, skillfully constructed over the most elevated part of the road. The immense volume of water, now restrained, now flung off by the inequalities of the rocks over which it bounds, takes the most varied and picturesque forms, which change each moment, amid a cloud of spray that sparkles in the light like silver. As we followed the mad course of the torrent, we saw it lose itself in the precipice at our feet; and bounding from one abyss to another, dash itself in im-

tent fury against the rocks which hem it in, and give back a stern echo, as the bellowing waters roar around their base, and battle with each new impediment; pressed upon in their turn by the ceaseless flood of those that are rushing down from the heights, and which are hurried onward eternally by the fresh outpouring of the rocky cataract.

Nothing can be conceived more grand than the wild career of the emancipated waters, when they escape into their final channel. The deep undermining of the rocks against which they leap in their mad violence,—the romantic and picturesque appearance of the bed along which they hurry; cumbered with huge fragments, storm-riven from the stern heights of the overhanging mountains, that throw their deep shadow over the ravine,—lofty trees, rooted far down in the abyss, which yet tower above you as you stand, and whose rigid branches are scarcely swayed by the cold stream of air created by the fall of the rushing waters—some, which have been tempest-stricken, yet lying, moss-grown and mouldering, across the mouth of the

gulph, drenched by the ceaseless spray, and forming a striking feature in the picture,—the deep, dreamy silence, broken only by the roar of the cataract,—the dense forests into which no sunbeam penetrates, and peopled only by beasts of prey,—the varied and stately outline of the rocky rampart, which shuts out the world beyond, each mountain based on earth, and crowned with clouds,—the narrow, devious, and toilsome path hanging over the precipice—all combine to form a picture, of which language is incompetent to convey an adequate idea.

Nor is the rapt spirit recalled to mere worldly thoughts until, a few paces onward, you come upon the trunk of a small tree hollowed into a tube, behind which is wrought a rude reservoir, to receive one of the many slender threads of water descending from the rock ; the overflow of the simple basin escaping by the hollow tube, and thus affording a mean of refreshment to the thirsty traveller.

The reaction produced on the mind by so apparently insignificant an object is instantaneous ; it is as the voice of fellowship in the

Desart—the offering of charity amid the waste—the link between the simple and the sublime! A portion of the same waters which are boiling and bellowing in the gulph a hundred paces beneath you, almost unapproachable by the surest foot, are here poured forth gently and liberally beside your path, and sparkling in the sunshine!

The road, narrow and tortuous as it is, is rendered still more dangerous by the fact, that the traveller is constantly coming in contact with strings of mules laden with timber, in so peculiar a manner as to render them very unpleasant neighbours on the edge of a torrent.

Each animal is charged with four plauks; two being attached on either side of his neck by a well-stuffed collar, and equally balanced; and this being the only point where they are secured, the timber, which projects in one mass just above the head of the mule, separates widely in the rear; and being frequently of immense length, fills up the whole path, and even hangs over the torrent; obliging the pedestrian pilgrim to clamber upon some ledge of rock, or to return

on his steps until he chances upon a convenient spot, where he may see them pass by in safety ; while the mules, on their side, with a sagacity perfectly admirable, will file along the very brink of the precipice ; and sometimes even half unbidden, as if conscious of the difficulty.

The guide who accompanied us was several times obliged to display his best skill in effecting a passage for the animals we had hired, and which carried our travelling cloaks ; for we made no other use of them. I pity the dull mortal who could pass this Desert, occupied in guiding the steps of his mule along the encumbered and dangerous path ; while, at the expense of a little fatigue, he might roam hither and thither untrammelled ; and when weary of hanging over the foaming torrent, and dizzy with its velocity and its roar, plunge into the still twilight of the forest ; and fling himself down to drink in, for a few instants, its deep, unbroken silence.

But the bell of the convent is once more pealing out, to call the fathers to their early orisons ;

daylight is slowly creeping over the sky,—my lamp burns dim, and my eyes are heavy. Ere I indulge my weariness, I will offer up a prayer for you in a Carthusian cell.

LETTER XXVII.

Barrier of the Desert—Symbol of the Order—The Croix Verte—Lovely Landscape—The Courrierie—Historical Associations of the Croix Verte—The Return of the Chartreux—Charcoal-burners.

ALTHOUGH in a state of excessive fatigue, I resume my endeavour to make you a participator, though in a very disproportionate degree, in the delight that my visit to this magnificent solitude has afforded to myself.

The ponderous barrier-fort which, previous to the Revolution, shut in the Carthusian Desarts from the world, and shut out all females from the haunts of the Chartreux, is now a ruin. It was constructed by order of the Government during the war between the custom-house force and the famous Mandrin; and occupied a narrow gorge of the Grande Aiguille. The strong square towers that flanked it have been razed to the earth, and their fragments yet remain beside the path.

At a little distance from this wreck of saintly security, the face of the rock has been smoothed, and the symbol of the order boldly wrought in the living stone. It is an affecting emblem—the more affecting from its very simplicity—a globe surmounted by a crucifix. You feel at once its import. Without the barrier, the world and the world's wants are pre-eminent; but when once you have passed the threshold of St. Bruno's Desart-home, the world is prostrate beneath the cross—the Creator is all in all—the created is worthy only as the work of His hand.

The next point on which I must venture to linger, is the station of the Croix Verte. It is a tall, well-proportioned crucifix, surmounting a heavy pedestal of stone, and overshadowed by a group of beeches. It stands at an abrupt angle, where the road, forsaking the course of the Guyer, turns suddenly to the left, developing immediately in front of you a lovely landscape—truly an oasis in the desart,—and totally dissimilar to any on which you have looked since you left the world.

The eye rests lovingly on gay green meadows—on pasturages covered with flocks—on woods, where the dark fir has yielded its place to the mountain-ash, the maple, and the elm,—and on the extensive buildings of the Courrierie, where, during the prosperity of the order, the Chartreux provided dwelling-places for the artisans employed about the monastery; and where you can easily detect the workshops, the barns, the storehouses, and the chapel, from the height whence you look down.

The whole pile is seated on a gentle declivity, covered with the brightest turf; and, in the bottom, the Guyer-mort turns the wheel of a small mill, ere it loses itself in the thick forest which fringes the side of the mountains, and stretches far into the valley.

It was beneath this crucifix, and in sight of this delicious spot, that on the 8th of January, 1816, the Monks, whom the Revolution had compelled to quit their Desarts, and who were at length permitted to return, assembled round the General of their Order; and came, followed by the population of all the surrounding vil-

lages, to resume once more the cross which had been stricken from their hands.

It must have been an imposing spectacle, and a most painful one, when it is remembered that no monastic order equals in its rigour that of the Chartreux; that all social communion is forbidden among the fathers; that they neither eat nor pray together, save on the sabbath, and on solemn feast-days,—their food being on all other occasions introduced into their cells through a sliding panel—food of the poorest description, and sparingly doled out,—that they are permitted but five hours' sleep each night, and even those divided into two separate portions by a midnight service,—that amid the intense cold of their bleak and snow-crested mountains they shave their heads, and cover their feet with sandals,—that with them the most innocent amusement becomes a crime because it is amusement,—when all these things are considered, even the most zealous heart must surely have bled at the well-meant and self-sacrificing delusion of men who sought to propitiate a God of Love by a service of suffering; and who voluntarily withdrew a second

time from the world, to bury themselves once more in their Desarts.

Some among them were doubtless aged—men whose beards were silvered by time, and whose cheeks were ploughed by tears—men upon whom their years lay heavy; and whose wasting strength required the generous food, and the careful tending of their connexions; and these came to die unsuccoured and unserved—to be laid in a grave over which no eye would weep, and no regret be uttered.

Yet should I have pitied less these Patriarchs of the Desarts, than those by whom they were reverently and humbly followed—the strong men who, in the enthusiasm of their blind zeal had vowed themselves to St. Bruno; who, unsated by one brief experience of an ascetic existence, came to resume their vows, and to fling from them yet again all the gentle and endearing impulses of nature—to rend asunder her loveliest links—to forswear parents, home, and country—to pass long years of silence, penitence, and prayer—to seal up for ever the fountains of social love and social harmony, whose

ever-flowing and generous streams pour gladness over the world—to check each high and noble aspiration after knowledge—to suppress the yearnings of intellect—to turn aside the mighty, the immeasurable love of the Creator—and to reject the blessings which he has freely offered, to dwell only on his terrors—to cast away all independence, energy, and loftiness of purpose—and to drag through an existence of unquestioning obedience and unmitigated mortification—surely this could have been no gladdening spectacle !

The road improved after we passed the Croix Verte ; the ascent is easy, and a brook runs parallel with it, brawling over its narrow bed, and overshadowed by the tall trees of a thick forest, which extends all the way to the monastery, distant from the Croix Verte about three quarters of a league.

It is assumed that several of the mountains in this immediate neighbourhood have at some time been volcanic, and the guide points out to you the course of the lava which they have flung

forth ; others are calcareous ; and others again are of a coarse granite.

As we approached the convent, we found the road encumbered with fir-splinters, and were almost smothered by the smoke of the burning, or rather smouldering piles of wood, which were in process of conversion into charcoal ; while the blackened and half-clad beings who surrounded them, seen beneath the deep shadows of the tall trees, and by the dim glare of the smothered fire, were no inapt representatives of forest-fiends.

LETTER XXVIII.

First View of the Monastery—Female Visitors—Offering of the Duchesse d'Angoulême—Anecdote of the Duchesse de Berri—Our Reception—The Infirmary—A Carthusian Cell—The Father Coadjutor—A monastic Mirror.

THE first view of the convent disappointed me—you come upon it at a disadvantageous point—you seem to see nothing but a vast assemblage of pointed roofs and narrow casements. It is not until you have ascended the Pré-aux-Vaches, which overlooks its entire extent, that you feel the whole majesty of the far-stretching and simple structure.

Ere we approached the entrance, we loitered for a moment to watch the labours of three lay-brothers, and about a score of peasants, who were busily employed in clearing the bed of a stream, that serves to turn a mill attached to the

convent; and which the late storms had choked up with huge stones and soil washed down from the mountains.

Previously to the Revolution, no female could approach within a league of the Grande Chartreuse; the followers of St. Bruno being as tenacious of the sanctity of their Desarts as Saint Senanus was of that of his "holy isle;" and even at this period, no profane feminine foot is allowed ever to have awoke the solemn echoes of their magnificent cloisters, save those of the Princesses of the blood-royal, and their attendants.

The Duchesse d'Angoulême repaid the hospitality of the monks by embroidering with her own hands an altar-piece for the chapel of the Virgin, which she commenced in Paris and finished in the convent; while a very characteristic anecdote was related to me of the Duchesse de Berri, during her sojourn under this saintly roof.

Every one is aware of Her Royal Highness's anxiety to create a "sensation," wherever and whenever she appears; and accordingly, on her

arrival at the Grande Chartreuse, she kept herself a prisoner in her apartment until the hour of a Grand Mass, at which all the community were assembled in the chapel; when she joined them with great parade, followed by her three ladies. But, alas! although every Chartreux in the chapel was aware that it was Madame la Duchesse de Berri, who had made a point of entering five minutes after the commencement of the service, not an eye was lifted towards her; and Her Royal Highness was left to the unassisted courtesies of the lay-brother who conducted her to a seat.

The Cenobites of the Desert were kneeling on the marble pavement of the chapel; and at the elevation of the Host, each prostrated himself on the earth, and so remained until the termination of the service, and the disappearance of Her Royal Highness; who departed in the course of the day, having no time to waste upon such ascetic devotees.

As we were the bearers of a letter to the Very Reverend Father Procureur, the head of the community, we were immediately received with

the utmost courtesy ; that is to say—for, alas ! the truth must be told—my uncle was conducted to a cell *within* the convent, and I to one *without* ; in a large building appropriated to female visitors, and distant about a hundred yards from the gate of the monastery.

The lay-brother who attended me laid much stress on the letter which we had brought ; and told me that while I remained, I was to be *traitée en princesse*, save indeed on the only point wherein I would fain have been so,—there was no hope of entrance for me ; and as I expressed the utter impossibility of passing the night alone in the “ Infirmary,” (for by this very cheerful name is the building designated,) it was at length conceded, that in the event of no fresh arrivals during the day, my uncle should become the tenant of another of the cells ; the whole of which open into a large, cold room, with a brick floor ; boasting for all furniture a long deal table, two wooden benches, and a couple of cupboards ; and for all ornament a plaster cast of the Virgin Mary, mounted on a bracket, and hung round with red beads,—a

ground-plan of the convent,—and two engravings; one of the Crucifixion, and the other of St. Bruno kneeling before an altar.

I am now writing in the chimney-corner, where a cheerful fire of pine-wood is blazing; and although wrapped in my travelling-cloak, the teeth are chattering in my head; and when I leave this comparatively-cheerful nook, it will be to creep into my narrow cell, where I have neither carpet, curtain, nor chair; to fling myself on a straw-bed, to lay my head on a straw-pillow, and to heap above me every article of dress capable of imparting the slightest heat.

At the side of my bed is hung a *bénitière*, and beneath it stands a wooden *prie-dieu*; a small table of the coarsest workmanship supports my washing apparatus; and now you have the whole *catalogue raisonnée* of the contents of my dormitory.

The lay-brother presented me with a glass of liqueur, to counteract the effects of the fatigue and wet feet under which I was suffering; and then, having made up an immense fire, left me for awhile; but soon returned with the compli-

ments of the Reverend Father Coadjutor, who had sent me some books and engravings for my amusement; and had desired him to say, that he would pay his respects to me between seven and eight o'clock; while in the mean time, he begged that I would ask for every thing which I required, and in the event of its being in the convent, it should be at my service.

My first request was for a chair, in order that I might creep yet closer to the enlivening fire; my second for a looking-glass, to enable me to make something like a toilette; the chair was instantly procured; but there was a demur as to the looking-glass, the good brother declaring that he did not believe there was such a thing to be found in the Chartreuse. He has, however, succeeded in bringing to me a most minute specimen of the mirror tribe, about six inches square, by which I shall probably be enabled to contemplate one feature at a time.

I leave off writing to avail myself of the luxury.

LETTER XXIX.

Convent Fare—Fresh Arrivals—The Father Coadjutor—Severity of the Order—Meetings in the Desert—Pleasant Companions—A Lay-brother of the Carthusians—Masquerading—Un Coup Manqué—Politics and Prejudice.

FEELING very sensibly the effects of the mountain air, we requested to have dinner at three o'clock, which was accordingly brought from the convent; and I mention this subject, although it is one which I am always reluctant to touch upon, for the express purpose of warning all future travellers, who may venture a pilgrimage to the Carthusian Desarts, to provide themselves with such edibles as they may deem expedient on leaving Grenoble,—the good monks making no difficulty whatever to cook any thing which they may carry,—and they will not then feel the misery of hunger, with the total inability

to partake of the monastic fare, which I experienced.

My only resource, on rejecting the bread-soup, and carp fried in oil, was the bread and butter, both of which were excellent ; the latter super-eminently so ; indeed, on ordinary occasion, I should have desired nothing more, but after a mountain-walk of four leagues, I found such a meal altogether insufficient.

My uncle and myself were yet at table, when another lay-brother ushered in two ladies, and two gentlemen ; and much as I rejoiced in having companions of my own sex, I was immediately struck with the probability that the arrival of Catholic females would deprive me of the promised visit of the Father Coadjutor ; and my conjecture proved to be too well founded. Nevertheless, I had an interview with the reverend monk ; but it was merely five minutes of compliment on either side. He is a remarkably fine man, despite his shaven head ; and cannot be more than seven or eight and thirty years of age. He was formerly an Advocate at Paris, of which city he is a native ; his address

is courteous and graceful, and his language refined and elegant.

He is the only monk in the convent who is allowed to speak, save upon solemn days, and then most sparingly ; and this privilege is indispensable to his situation, as he receives all travellers, and transacts all business. The Co-adjutor is changed every second year, unless when re-elected, which is frequently the case.

The lay-brothers are necessarily exempted from this privation.

What says Scott in his " Lord of the Isles ?"

" In plains and desarts when men meet,
They pass not as in peaceful street ; "

and if men cannot in such situations resist the *cacoethes loquendi*, it is assuredly not to be expected of women. Thus, then, you will have no difficulty in believing, that after the new-comers had refreshed themselves, and just as a sudden and heavy rain began to clatter against the casements, we all crowded round the fire, and prepared for a regular gossip, as though we had been acquainted since the Deluge. Our new friends expressed a good deal of surprise at

meeting with an Englishwoman who would *talk*, and even *laugh*, with people to whom she had never been regularly introduced ; while I was delighted at my happy fortune in having encountered persons of information and good breeding, who were both courteous and entertaining.

The gentlemen returned from the convent through the rain ; and seeing us all so comfortably established, determined on remaining in the Infirmary until the convent gates were closed for the night ; an arrangement at which the well-bearded brother for some time demurred, but to which he finally yielded ; and he ultimately became so amused by our gossipry, that he fairly sat down a few yards from us, and joined in the conversation.

He was a most extraordinary person, this old brother. Sometimes he seemed to possess the simplicity of a child ; at others he startled us by a sentence which was replete with monkish craft. His observations on the different ladies, who from time to time have visited the convent, were most amusing—indeed, I may say, extraordinary ; and when he told us, that he had

been a follower of St. Bruno for five-and-thirty years, I confess that I was puzzled to understand how he could have acquired so intimate a knowledge of the sinful ways of a "wicked world!"

He informed us that the day before we arrived, a Russian prince had been received at the Chartreuse, with three persons in his suite; and that after his departure, they had ascertained that one of those persons was a female. The portly brother affected much horror at the enormity of which she had been guilty; and then told us another anecdote of a lady who had entered in disguise a year or two ago; and who played her part so well, that no suspicion was entertained of her sex; until, unfortunately, in passing before the high altar of the chapel, instead of simply bending her head, she dropped a curtsy; and thus betrayed her secret.

The garrulous monk laughed at the remembrance of the panic which he had occasioned, by whispering in her ear, "*Cela suffit, Madame; il faut revenir sur vos pas;*" an order which,

in her agitation, she obeyed without comment or delay.

As the party of which she was a member had been anxious to return to Grenoble the same night, they had made the tour of the convent while refreshments were preparing for them; and when the unhappy lady was put forth, she requested leave to rest herself, and to partake of some food in the Infirmary; but this indulgence was denied to her, on account of the "sacrilege" of which she had been guilty; and she was compelled to travel back as far as St. Laurent-du-Pont, before she could procure any thing but water.

The *gusto* with which the old brother narrated the incident, did more credit to his vivacity than to his charity; and when I remarked how much the poor lady must have suffered; he said that without doubt she did, but it was all to the glory of St. Bruno!

From this subject he digressed to politics; and by some extraordinary contatenation of ideas, he skipped from the abdication of Charles X., to our fortress-rock of Gibraltar, which he said

had been taken from the French nation by craft; whence he deduced that the English were the most crafty of all nations; and finally decided that to their cunning alone they were indebted for their successes by sea and land.

As he appeared to be perfectly satisfied with his own view of the subject, and as British bravery was not likely to suffer very materially from the opinion of a Carthusian monk, we felt no inclination to argue the point; but as I could not avoid laughing, my cachinnation answered the same purpose; and he began very sententiously to explain to me the utter impossibility that I, as an Englishwoman, could take the same *unprejudiced* view of the subject that he did. He then asked us several very absurd questions, confounding persons and dates in a most ingenious manner, and resolute not to be set right; only crossing himself from time to time, and impressing on our companions that we were a nation of heretics.

When he was fairly tired of talking, he went to one of the closets, and brought forth an armful of bed-linen, telling us that we must make

our own beds, as we could not expect a brother of St. Bruno to perform the office for us ; and that it was in fact a great concession on the part of the community to provide such luxuries for females. No sooner, however, had my companions retired to their several cells, for the purpose of availing themselves of his advice, while I, being far too weary for such an exertion, quietly retained my seat by the fire ; than the good monk relented, and taking up the portion which was destined for me, he said kindly, " Sit still ; I will strain a point for once, for you are fatigued by your walk to-day, and have not strength to wait upon yourself ; you are English too, and therefore probably do not know how to set about it."

Of course I resolved instantly to vindicate my talents as a *fille-de-chambre* from such a suspicion ; and I politely declined the offer of his services.

I am about to make trial of my skill,—and so, good night !

LETTER XXX.

Primitive Breakfast—The Wilderness of St. Bruno—
Magnificent Forest—Grassy Glade—Chapel of the
Virgin—Ruined Cross—Interior of the Chapel—Dis-
pleasure of the Madonna—Stern Character of the
Locality—The Vow of St. Bruno—Shield of James
de Merly—The Cavern Spring—Traces of the First
Fathers.

THIS morning all our party agreed to breakfast together, which would be at once more sociable, and give less trouble to the good brother; and accordingly a large pitcher of delicious milk, a new loaf, and a plate of excellent butter, were placed before us. Our loquacious attendant pressed me to have tea, which they keep in the convent in the event of sickness among their visitors; but being anxious not to appear more exacting than my companions, I resolved to share their more primitive fare; when suddenly a bright thought flashed across the mind of the

brother :—" Yes, yes," said he, as he turned the key in the lock of the capacious closet ; " she is English, and not very strong, poor thing ; and the English are fond of rum, and I have some here. She shall have a glass of rum."

Can you not imagine my burst of laughter ? Nevertheless, I had great difficulty in convincing the hospitable *religieux*, that I positively declined the delicate offer which he had made me.

Immediately after breakfast, the lay-brother who acts as a guide to the chapel of the Virgin, and that of St. Bruno, both of which are deeper in the Desart, was ready to attend us ; and ere the sun had clomb the rocky heights by which we were surrounded, we were *en route*.

Crossing the valley, at whose extremity stands the monastery, constructed amphitheatrically on a declivity ; and leaving behind us the species of " lazaretto" of which we were the temporary tenants ; we followed our guide up a steep ascent, completely overshadowed by timber of the most magnificent growth. The stately elm, the fluttering beach, the far-spreading oak, the grace-

ful cedar, and, towering above all, the giant pine, formed a perfect roof over our heads; while beside our path a torrent leaped down from the height which we were ascending, and filled the solitude with its appropriate voice.

Emerging from the shadow of the forest, we came suddenly upon a grassy glade, surrounded by lofty firs; and saw immediately before us the Virgin's chapel. Small in size, and simple in structure, this little building is in perfect harmony with the scene around.

Ere we reached it we remarked the ruins of a huge crucifix, of which the massy pedestal still remains nearly perfect, while the cross lies, partially overgrown by the rank grass which has sprung up around it, in ponderous fragments beside the path. This, as our guide informed us, was the first crucifix of stone erected in the Desart; and was, indeed, partly wrought by the holy hands of St. Bruno himself.

I naturally expressed my surprise that it should not be restored, as such a relic of their canonized founder must be most valuable to the order. For a moment the monk made no re-

ply ; but finally accounted for the apparent neglect, by asserting that the stone was so thoroughly perished, that they feared to disturb it, lest they should destroy it altogether.

The chapel is an oblong square, with a pointed roof, surmounted by a small cross. It was erected in the year 1440, by Dom François de Marême, at that period the General of the Order : but although its original character has been scrupulously preserved within, the exterior has been embellished by an ornamented peristyle, composed of several wooden columns, between eight and ten feet in height, supporting a projecting roof, which shelters the door of entrance.

On this door, in the best style of the fourteenth century, a small *basso relievo*, representing the Madonna receiving the adoration of angels, was mutilated during the Revolution ; but the appearance of the whole building is graceful and pleasing. The well-kept and cleanly appearance of the exterior, with its white pillars, and walls painted in *fresco* ; its pine-roof, and its simple cross, in striking relief against the dark mass of firs grouped immediately behind it ;

forms a picture of quiet beauty, which is another new feature in the Desart.

All around the building are strown masses of rock, overgrown by ferns, fox-glove, and other hardy plants; while the larch, the beech, and the willow, mingle their flexile branches with those of the darker and more rigid pine trees that skirt the glade.

The first view of the interior of the chapel is striking, from its extreme cheerfulness. The domed roof is painted in *fresco* with the finest ultramarine and the brightest blue, and sprinkled entirely over with the cypher *MR*—*Maria Regina*. The walls are in the same style, save that the cyphers are there replaced by scrolls, each inscribed with one of the myriad designations of the Virgin, taken from her litanies. The floor is of rude mosaic; and the altar is remarkable only for its extreme simplicity, and the offering of S. A. R. the Duchesse d'Angoulême.

On either side of the altar, two covered stalls of skilfully inlaid wood, are the only costly ornaments of the chapel; the foot-boards originally belonging to them, are now covered by

others less elaborately wrought, which conceal the *fleurs-de-lys* profusely introduced into their predecessors.

This chapel is built in the very valley wherein the first disciples of St. Bruno erected their huts, and at no great distance from the spot where he established his own ; and it is in commemoration of that fact designated *Sacellum Beatæ Mariæ à Casalibus*.

The Chartreux pay frequent visits to this chapel, which they venerate as connected with the earliest memories of their Order, no less than as a shrine dedicated to the worship of the Virgin,—a worship which, for a considerable period after their foundation, was comparatively neglected ; and the lay-brother favoured us with a miraculous narration of the apparition of Saint Paul to the Prior of the Chartreux, acquainting him that the eight conflagrations by which their convent had been destroyed, and by which their picture-gallery and their collection of ancient MSS. were lost, originated in their neglect of the Virgin, who was disposed to look with a favourable eye on the followers of St. Bruno ; but who,

nevertheless, resented their want of devotion towards herself.

Availing themselves of this holy information, the Chartreux immediately resolved on performing an office to the Madonna at the commencement of every service, as well as on serving occasional masses at the chapel in the Desart; since which time the Grande Chartreuse has become as anti-inflammable as asbestos; and consequently no further accidents have happened from fire.

Wilder and sterner become the features of the scene, as you proceed towards the wilderness of St. Bruno; the holy spot whereon the first Chartreux reared his low hut, and, like Saint Kevin, hoped to shut out for ever the world and the world's daughters,—of the stern cenobite who calmly fulfilled the unsocial fiat of a priestly vision; and resolved that, on reaching the Desart, no shepherd's pipe should ever invade its solitudes—no huntsman's horn awaken its echoes—and above all, no woman's foot intrude, no woman's smile penetrate its recesses, to violate the holy calm of his mountain fastnesses.

The forests grow denser, the road more difficult. At times the pine-branches gather so closely above your head, that you walk on in a solemn twilight; the masses of rock which encumber the path become more fantastic in outline, and more considerable in bulk; and the leaping torrent, as it bounds over these new and formidable barriers, gives forth a louder voice.

Suddenly the woods again recede, but this time it is not to give place to a grassy glade: a few steps forward bring you to an open space, scattered over with rocks of the wildest and sternest aspect, many of them overgrown with moss and lichens, others gleaming out white and cold in the light. Far as the eye can penetrate through the dense forest which terminates the prospect, the same character of scenery prevails; all is stern, and gloomy, and savage—rushing waters; overshadowing woods, sighing monotonously under the wind; broken masses of rock, surrounded by a thick underwood, and affording shelter to the bear and the wolf. All that the imagination can picture to itself of the desolate

and the dreary in nature, seems to be collected on this spot of earth, as if to repel human intrusion.

Such is the wilderness of St. Bruno—the spot on which he reared the holy symbol of the Cross, and laid himself down at its foot upon a bed of rock ; to forget, and to be, as he fondly hoped, forgotten by the world.

The whole neighbourhood of the chapel is full of saintly reminiscences. Here a mass of rock supports the armorial shield of James de Merly, bishop of Toulon, who surrounded the rude altar of St. Bruno by the present building. It is mutilated, and partially defaced, for the stone has begun to yield to the influence of time and the humidity of the atmosphere, but its situation is striking and appropriate. The rock against which it leans is thrown into deep shadow by a cluster of pines ; which, rising from the gulph immediately behind it, and along which the waters of the sacred fountain of St. Bruno hurry away through the gloom, to fling themselves into the torrent at the base of the mountain ; tower proudly into the sky, and seem to

lose themselves among the clouds. There, the cavern which conceals the basin where the holy anchorite was wont to slake his thirst, and to which religious superstition once assigned miraculous powers, as well as a miraculous origin. On one side a rude cross, raised by the hand of the saint beside a grey and sterile rock, near a group of ancient and venerable firs, marks the spot from whence, stretched upon the earth, he exhorted his followers to works of penitence and piety ; and on the other, you can yet trace the vestiges of his narrow cell, the rude seat, hewn in the living rock which was his resting-place, and the boundary of the little garden wherein he cultivated herbs and simples.

It is impossible not to give yourself up, mind and heart, to the enthusiasm of the moment, as you look around you, and remember that you stand amid the chosen haunts of the Fathers of the Desert—that every shapeless rock was to them as an altar to the Eternal, the work of his hands—every cave an oratory—every forest-depth a shrine. Nor does your imagination deceive you ; for as you plunge deeper into the

woods, mouldering or prostrate crosses meet you on every side,—relics of the days when the austere Carthusians boasted not, as they do in our times, a stately temple in which to pay their adorations to the Most High ; but made to themselves an Altar of the Eternal Rocks, and a Temple of the Desart !

LETTER XXXI.

Chapel of St. Bruno—The Altar-piece—Frescoes—
Piety of the Duc d'Angoulême—Vision of St. Hugo
—Origin of the Order—St. Bruno—Desart-Huts—
Erection of the Monastery—Departure of St. Bruno
for Rome—Prosperity of the Order—Conflagrations
—Revolutionary Effects in the Desart—Return of
the Community.

THE chapel of St. Bruno, enclosing, as I have already mentioned, the altar of unhewn stone, erected by the holy founder of the Carthusian Order, stands upon the most abrupt mass of the immediate group; and is approached by a steep and rude pathway, which leads past the mouth of the cavern spring.

The exterior of the edifice is in extremely bad taste: the natural character of the rock is, on its summit, disguised by the soil, which, in laying the foundations of the building, was flung out,

and used to level, or at least to soften down, the picturesque irregularities of its scite; thus destroying much of the natural character of the spot.

The inconsequent and ill-proportioned peristyle which shelters the entrance, and the iron railing which guards the perpendicular edge of the rock, from whence you look down into the dark gulph, and listen to the roar of the torrent bellowing along its gloomy recesses, are in bad keeping with the magnificent character of all the surrounding objects: but the disappointment which these occasion is forgotten as the door of the modest chapel falls back, and you pass the threshold.

No wooden images, decked out in lace, gold-leaf, and foil—no ill-executed martyrdoms, or monkish miracles, harrow your feelings, and shock your taste in this elegant little edifice. A floor of graceful, if not costly mosaic, divides your attention with an altar cleanly and simple, surmounted by a figure skilfully cast in clay, representing St. Bruno in prayer to the Virgin, and attended by an angel; that, if divested of

its accessories, which are not creditable either to the taste or the skill of their originator, would be strangely life-like and startling. It is overshadowed by a roof of wood, covered with moss, beneath which it is necessary to pass, in order to see the crumbling mass of rock that once served as the shrine of the saint; and which the before-mentioned James de Merly has protected from further decay by a substantial casing of pine-wood, leaving it unenclosed only at the back of the altar, to enable the pious to look upon, and even touch the holy relic.

The frescoes on the walls of the chapel are so admirable, as to deceive you for a moment, when, on entering the chapel, you look upon the six cowed figures occupying their several niches, as casts rather than paintings; and the very legend of the lay-brother who acts as your guide, told us it is beside that altar, and in the presence of those life-like portraiture of the individuals who form its subject,—all combine to inspire you with a calm and holy feeling, which, if it does not amount to a pitch of enthusiasm that induces you to put firm faith in

the tale to which you listen, at least inspires you with an unaffected respect for the self-devoted men who sacrificed themselves in this Desart to a sincere, although perhaps mistaken piety.

An inscription on the wall of the chapel informs the stranger that both this, and the one in the valley dedicated to the Virgin, were repaired in 1820 at the expense of S. A. R. Monseigneur le Duc d'Angoulême, who in that year visited the Desart.

But you will perhaps ask me for the legend to which I allude—it is simply this : that Saint Hugo, the bishop of Grenoble, saw a vision, in which the Carthusian Desart was illuminated at midnight by the power of seven brilliant stars, which streamed down so bright a light, that the forest-depths were laid bare beneath their glory ; the seven stars typifying the founder of the Chartreux and his six companions. These half dozen disciples are the four holy fathers, and the two no less holy brothers, whose effigies now occupy the walls of the chapel.

Having given you the legend, I may as well

briefly acquaint you with the *natural* origin of this extraordinary and far-famed establishment.

Its founder, Saint Bruno, was born of opulent parents, in the city of Cologne. Reared in great luxury, renowned for his high scientific attainments, and being, on the completion of his scholastic studies, elected to an important ecclesiastical office at Rheims, he was expected by his friends to succeed to the first dignities of his profession. At this period he is said to have been visited at midnight by a vision, which inspired him with so great a disgust of the world, with its empty honours, and still more inconsequent frivolities, that he immediately forsook both the one and the other; and accompanied by three of his friends, buried himself in a wild and solitary retreat amid the Desarts of Dauphiny.

This spot was already known as the Valley of the Chartreuse; a name which it continued to bear, and ultimately transmitted to the Order. For a time no habitation was attempted by the stern cenobites, which bore any likeness to the dwellings of men. Rude huts, leaning against the jagged sides of the rocks; or cells, formed of

the damp and unwholesome caverns in the immediate neighbourhood, sufficed to the wants of the first fathers; while a small oratory was erected on an isolated point of rock, where they made their common orisons. But as the number of monks increased, it became necessary to provide more efficient protection against the severity of the mountain-snows, and the wild tempests which rocked the mighty pines even to their roots: the little community having been several times surprised by frightful avalanches, beneath which several of the brethren were buried.

It was in 1296 that the site of the present building was selected, the previous establishment of the Courrierie, which had succeeded to the huts and caverns already alluded to, having been found still insufficient to shelter the constantly augmenting community; and hence the origin of the noble pile, now known as the Monastery of the Chartreuse.

Saint Bruno did not witness the progress of his order; for the fame of his holiness, and of his extraordinary mental endowments, induced Pope Urban II. to withdraw him from his

mountain-solitude by a summons to Rome. The holy cenobite attempted in vain to evade the invitation. He urged the inspiration under which he had sought the Desert,—the pledge that he had given to his companions,—the duties and example which he owed to the increased and still increasing community: the papal will was absolute; and Saint Bruno bade farewell to his holy brethren, to perform his new duties at Rome, and ultimately to die in Calabria.

Frequent donations increased the possessions of the Chartreux; and they soon became the owners, not only of their valley, but of a great portion of the defile of the Guyer; and the only misfortune to which they appeared vulnerable as a community, was fire. I have already mentioned, that on eight different occasions this evil overtook them; and not always from accident. The Chartreuse was partially destroyed from this cause in 1320, in 1371, in 1474, in 1510, and in 1562.

This was bad enough; but as yet these conflagrations had been Divine visitations, and the pious fraternity had seen in them only an addi-

tional incentive to prayer and penitence; but ere long the hand of man was in the work, for in 1582, the Huguenots drove the monks from their desert-home; and after having pillaged the monastery, burnt it down.

Then followed the terrific fires of 1611, and 1676, which left no portion of the new erections standing, save the walls; for the Chartreux, with a perseverance based on piety, unmurmuringly restored their monastery after each conflagration on the same spot, which was endeared to them by a thousand memories of their illustrious founder.

During the Revolution, when the children of Saint Bruno were again scattered abroad, and forced back upon a world which they had voluntarily forsaken, all was pillaged and laid waste; but the buildings were left intact, as, from their situation, it was deemed useless to destroy them.

I have already described to you the return of the brethren when the time of terror was overpast. But they returned not as they had departed: they came back shorn of their ancient

possessions, pillaged of their painfully-accumulated wealth,—to poverty, and privation, and insignificance.

Thanks, however, as I before mentioned, to the Chapel of the Virgin in the Desart of Saint Bruno, the brotherhood have now secured themselves against the visitation of fire! Heaven knows, they do not require a constant recurrence of this frightful scourge to deepen the privations and sufferings of their existence.

LETTER XXXII.

**Influence of the Locality—Subordinate Monasteries—
The Abbey of Witham—Recollections of Mr. Beck-
ford—Convent in Poland—Venetian Monastery—
Chartreuse of Rome.**

It is strange how I love the deep stillness of this awful solitude ! It is so unlike any other spot that I ever visited—so calm, so stupendous, and so holy, that it creates a feeling as new as it is engrossing.

The rushing of the many torrents,—the occasional scream of a bird of prey,—the prolonged and melancholy sweeping of the wind among the pines,—but, above all, the clear calm ringing out of the convent-bell, are sounds in such perfect accordance with the whole aspect of the locality, that any outbreak of mere worldly enjoyment would jar upon the senses, and but poorly compensate for their absence ; while the din of human contention, and the fever of human

strife, could surely never withstand the soothing influence of the surrounding objects.

There is something imposing too, as your eye rests on the stupendous pile thus buried in the Desart, in the knowledge that no less than three hundred and sixty subordinate monasteries of the same rigid and self-denying Order once received their laws from this deep and prayer-awakened solitude; and accepted humbly and obediently the infliction of penitence and mortification from its superior.

Though shorn of much of its splendour, fettered in its power, and crippled in its resources, there is a majesty and a far-reaching pomp in the whole quiet aspect of the edifice, which satisfies the mind as it falls back upon the past. It is startling to reflect that in England—where the very existence of the Desart whence I now write is unknown to thousands—there were formerly no less than five Carthusian monasteries; the most distinguished being that of Witham, on the property of the celebrated owner of Font-hill Abbey, whose visit to this interesting spot in 1782-3, is still remembered with enthusiasm.

The lay-brother who attended us could describe his person, repeat many of his courteous expressions, expatiate on the avidity with which he listened to the holy legends, that by his own account must have been most liberally poured forth for his amusement; and on the fearless agility with which he penetrated to the deepest recesses of the bear-haunted forests, or clombed the jagged peaks of the vapour-crested and gigantic rocks.

He remembered too, and this with more gratulation than all the rest, that their distinguished guest had promised to guard the tributary Abbey of Witham from all heretic desecration; and to continue to the necessitous of the Order, wherever he might meet with them, the same munificence of which he had displayed such princely proofs in the Desart.

It would appear, that during the palmy days of the Carthusians, there was not a country throughout civilized Europe in which they did not possess a monastery; while, with the usual tact and taste in the selection of localities for which the cowed inmates of religious houses

have ever been famous, the position of many of them was eminently picturesque and beautiful.

Thus, in Poland, a Carthusian convent rose in the centre of a calm and fertile island, over which the holy recluses could wander unnoted ; and commune with their chastened spirits amid the low warbling of birds, the soft whispering of leaves, and the calm fall of waters.

In the environs of Venice the sacred edifice was overarched with boughs, nestled amid majestic trees, and wrapped from the gaze of the idle and the profane by the thick forest which surrounded it.

In Rome—in the Eternal City, where the glorious past touches palms with the inglorious present,—where the fallen column of mighty ages of freedom and heroism is overgrown by the rank weeds of slavery and degradation,—where the vast and solemn ruins of by-past power and magnificence are flouted by the squalid and inconsequent erection of modern insignificance,—the Carthusian monastery was erected amid mighty remnants of human great-

ness, prostrated by that Hand which nothing can resist.

This most appropriate of all localities for so rigid and self-abasing an Order as that of Saint Bruno, must indeed have afforded a constant and engrossing subject of thought to the brotherhood,—have taught them daily and hourly a lesson which must have penetrated to their heart of hearts ; and have inspired them with a more utter carelessness of worldly advantages, and a more thorough contempt for human undertakings, than the combined arguments of all the holy Fathers of the Church.

How fully might the recluse enter into the nothingness of life, with its eager aspirations, its feverish ambition, and its empty vanity, as he took his station beside some noble monument, half buried in the dust ; and trampled under foot the lettered record of a half-obiterated, and quite-forgotten name !

LETTER XXXIII.

The Forest-Path — The Death-Moss — The Pré-aux-Vaches—Return to the Lazaretto — Poverty of the Chartreux — Leave-taking — Departure from the Desart.

AMONG the heaped-up rocks which cumber the forest in the rear of the interesting little oratory of St. Bruno, the wanderer occasionally finds a bank covered with the fragrant Alpine strawberry, tufts of the large-leaved fern, and clusters of scarlet geranium; but all traces of these plants vanish as he advances, and all is again dark, stern, and silent.

On returning from the wild solitudes which we had been exploring, we left the Virgin's chapel on our right; and striking into the centre of the wood which fringes the side of a steep rock, on many of whose venerable pines hung wreaths of the greyish-coloured silken

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parasite, which is called in "wood-craft" the *death-moss*, and which gives timely warning that the work of decay has commenced on the noble tree to which it clings, and that thus the axe will be no sacrilege; we suddenly emerged into broad daylight, and found ourselves on the edge of a grassy hill, affording admirable pasture to the monastic cattle, and called the *Pré-aux-Vaches*; from whence we looked down upon the whole extent of the convent, with its long roofs, and numerous gables.

Time had passed on unheeded; and as all our party had agreed to quit the Desert together at a stated hour, we hastily concluded our walk; and arrived at the "lazaretto" just as the good lay-brother who provided for our wants, made his appearance from the convent.

Our frugal meal had not been long concluded, when I was startled by a ceremony, which however simple, jarred upon all the romantic associations of a determined "convent-hunter" like myself; to whom the circumstance was altogether without precedent. I allude to the presentation of a bill, regularly drawn out item by

item, as though we had been sojourning in an hotel.

This custom has been entailed on the Char-
treux by their necessities; the Order having
been, as I have already stated, much impo-
verished since the Revolution, by being deprived
of the produce of their forests; and left depen-
dant, in a great degree, upon the piety or gene-
rosity of casual visitors.

Thus, those who can afford no more, have
the opportunity of barely remunerating the
good fathers for what they have positively re-
ceived at their hands; while they who have
alike the inclination and the power to be more
munificent, are left at liberty to make such ad-
ditions as they may think proper, in return for
the courtesy and kindness of their reception.

I have preserved the bill that was presented
to us as a curious relic; and have now only to
add, that we have received a pressing invitation
to return, at some future period, from the good-
humoured, garrulous old lay-brother, in whose
favour we have made great progress during our
stay; and to whom I am indebted for the brief

resumé of the history of his order, which I sent to you in a former letter.

I was much amused by his manner of taking the money ; his open palm being covered by the skirt of his robe, as though to secure him from its contaminating contact ; and the ceremony being rendered still more edifying by the prostration with which it terminated, and the earnest salute that he bestowed on the stone floor of the cell.

Have I succeeded in giving you even *an idea* of La Grande Chartreuse ? If so, my coming pilgrimage to St. Laurent-du-Pont will be rendered less fatiguing.

The mules are at the gate——

Farewell ! alike to you, and to the Carthusian Desarts.

LETTER XXXIV.

The Grenoble Library—Carthusian MSS.—Jesuistical Novels—MS. of a Work by Ste. Catherine—Decrees of Gratian—Autograph Letters—L'Abbé Fleury—Priestly Politeness—The Abbess of St. Germain en Laye—Piety of the Sixteenth Century—Mde. de Maintenon and the British Court—Works of Mde. de Guyon—Controversy—Jesuistical Tenets—Conventual Reading—Pascal's "Lettres Provinciales"—La Bruyère's "Dialogues sur le Quiétisme"—Paraphrase of the Pater Noster of the Molinists—Lampoon.

Grenoble.

ONCE more I am at Grenoble, but with a heart and an imagination still full of La Grande Chartreuse; and I have this moment returned from the library, where I have spent the day among the Carthusian MSS., sent hither for greater security at the period of the Revolution. The authorities of the town have been even more true to their trust than was anticipated

by the Desert-Fathers, for they have refused to restore them ; and they now form one of the most interesting features of their collection, amounting to no less than 500 !

On running my eye over the catalogue, I was somewhat startled to come upon a work entitled “Receuil de Nouvelles de Literature, et autres. 2 tom. 4to. 18me. siecle.” Novels in a Carthusian convent ! I could scarcely believe that I had read aright ; until I found, written beneath the name of the work, the following amusing note :—“On attribue ces Nouvelles à Tricaud ; mais elles ont été tronquées par Dom de la Marez, Chartreux de Lyon ; qui en a retranché tout ce qui lui a paru contraire aux Jesuites.”

Ex pede Hercules !

The first MS. which attracted my curiosity, was written in a most crabbed and difficult autograph by a Chartreux, in the beginning of the seventeenth century ; having been by him translated from the original Italian of “La bienheureuse Catherine,” which *bienheureuse Catherine* I imagine to have been Ste. Catherine

of Sienna, as I remember to have seen other works by her hand ; and am not aware that the *original* saint of that name blended her piety with literature.

Be my suggestion correct or not, it is nevertheless certain that a more extraordinary production never fell under my observation. It is entitled " A Dialogue between God,—the Body, — the Soul, — Self-love,—the Mind,—and Humanity ;" and is closely written in one octavo volume.

It is a species of mystical prose-poem, and commences by a dialogue between the Body and the Soul : each is jealous of the supremacy of the other, and of the influence of that supremacy upon its own impulses ; and, under these circumstances, is anxious to be enabled to emancipate itself from time to time from the thralldom of the compulsory partnership ; and as this can only be effected by the one party becoming annihilated during the term of the other's liberty, each is fearful to place so much trust in the fair dealing of its companion, lest it should, in the enjoyment of its new and untrammelled state

of existence, forget to resume its natural chain at the proper period.

In this difficulty they call in Self-love, to arbitrate between them ; then they add Mind to their consultations, — and Humanity ; and finally the Creator appears upon the scene, who convinces them that their pre-ordained and present state is that which is the most certain to conduce to the individual benefit of each ; and the pious Catherine concludes with a prayer that she may also have grace given unto her to see that “ whatever is, is right.”

Do not imagine that I had courage to read the whole of this extravagant rhapsody. I did in truth spend a couple of hours over it ; but as the Carthusian caligraphy grew from bad to worse, after deciphering the first fifty pages, I e'en did as the children do with Jack the Giant-Killer, when their curiosity is more powerful than their patience,—I took a peep at the conclusion.

So much for the subject of a work written by a saint, and translated by a monk ! I will now give you a specimen of the style—it is the Body which speaks :—

“ I want to eat, to drink, to sleep, and to take pleasure in something, in order that thou mayest enjoy me when thou requirest me ; and if thou wouldest have the advantage of my wits, do not make me labour much, for if I am tired, I cannot attend to thy affairs ; but if, on the contrary, thou wilt condescend to my necessities, thou may'st recreate thy spirit in thinking, that if God hath created so many delectable and pleasant things for a mortal body, he has made greater and more numerous for the immortal soul.”

The Soul replies in a manner not one whit more logical or pious. I have translated the passage *literally* ; and it must be confessed that the learned Saint and the holy Carthusian have bequeathed to posterity a very pretty specimen of the mystical absurdity of the seventeenth century.

Of a very different description is another monkish MS., written on vellum, large folio, with illuminated vignettes and capitals, exquisitely painted and gilt, and in fine preservation. It is a “ Collection of the Decrees of Gratian,”

a Benedictine monk of the twelfth century. The volume terminates with a large miniature, representing a monarch in the act of unrolling a genealogical table, and habited in the costume of the eighth century,—a blue tunic sprinkled with embroidered flowers, and a scarlet mantle. It is a very curious volume.

I was next attracted by a collection of autograph letters. The first that I read was from the Abbé Fleury, author of the “Ecclesiastical History,” bearing date October 1697, and addressed to Dom le Masson, prior of La Grande Chartreuse, and General of the Order. It consisted of three pages of acknowledgment for his “Life of Monseigneur the Bishop of Geneva,” and was an amusing specimen of priestly politeness.

I afterwards found half a dozen others on the same subject; among which were the autographs of Dumas, Picard, the Jesuit Ignacio Carvocio, and the Cardinal Le Camus. A very affecting letter from William Ayrault, Archbishop of Paris, requesting the prayers of the Chartreux on account of his great age; and one from Dom

le Masson himself, to M. de la Grange, Docteur de Sorbonne, expressing his regret that his *Life of the Bishop of Geneva* had given so much offence to the Genevese monks.

The next letter on which I chanced, was enveloped in a copy of the reply that had been sent to it. It was from the Abbess of the Ursulines of St. Germain en Laye, and is curious from affording a glimpse of the times. It bears date August 16th, 1696; and commences, like many of the others, with acknowledgments to Dom le Masson for his work, written in a style which smacks more of the court than the cloister,—“Less than the piety and erudition of St. François de Sales, would not have sufficed to the historian of the Holy Lord Bishop of Geneva,” &c.

After this complimentary flourish, the good Abbess goes on to recommend to his prayers the young Count David, son of the Countess d'Almont, lady of honour to the Queen, who had been made captive by the Turks; and Madame de Maintenon, for whom she requests a copy of one of his previous works. She expatiates at

great length, not only on the piety of Mde. de Maintenon and the French King, but also on that of their Britannic Majesties, and the persons composing their court.

She then proceeds to inveigh against the writings of Madame de Guyon, which she declares to have perverted the minds, and undermined the principles of her community; and adds, that Mde. de Maintenon has caused her to be arrested and imprisoned. The letter concludes with entreaties for his prayers, and reiterated acknowledgments.

The reply, which is also lengthy, expresses the pious joy of the Carthusian General at the intelligence of the goodly state of the courtly consciences, afforded by the letter of the Abbess; the presentation of copies of his works both to herself and Mde. de Maintenon; and congratulations on the imprisonment of Mde. de Guyon, whose writings he declares to have withdrawn from all the Carthusian convents, and burnt; and of which he says—“*Ces beaux livres empoisonnés d'un venin qui gagne le cœur sans qu'on s'en apperçoive;*” and he then re-

commends to the attention of the Abbess a compilation of his own, expressly fitted to the use of convents ; concluding, like herself, with a string of compliments, which would not have disgraced a more worldly correspondent.

You may, perhaps, be curious to know the nature of these works, which had power to alarm an Ursuline Abbess, to awaken the wrath of a Carthusian General, and to cause the imprisonment of their author ; that author being, moreover, a woman.

They were sectarian writings growing out of the famous controversy between the Molinists and the Jansenists, which agitated France for more than a hundred years ; and which gave the vindictive Richelieu an opportunity of sending Jean Duverger de Hauranne, the accomplished Abbé de Saint-Cyran, whom he personally hated, to the Château de Vincennes.

The order of the Jesuits sprang to life during these times of storm and dissension, and their desire of power plunged them at once headlong in the controversy. An ingenious and seductive system of metaphysics drew around them a

numerous party : it was founded on the opinions of the Spanish Jesuit Molina, who designated it *la Science Moyenne*, and who declared man to be gifted with sufficient grace to work out his own salvation, of which he was at liberty to avail himself or not, as he saw fit ; and to be thus possessed of a power which rendered him, in a great degree, independent of his Creator.

Suarez, his successor, corrected this system in part, by asserting that grace infallibly operated in the soul without any human volition ; although mankind had power to resist, or to yield to it at will.

The contrary doctrine of the Jansenists requires no explanation.

Mde. de Guyon was a writer of the Jesuistical party,—a woman of warm imagination, and specious rhetoric. The effect of so comfortable a creed on monkish morals and conventual principles must be apparent at a glance ; and the works of this champion of Molinism were soon in the hands of every female community in France.

The ideal freedom which they preached was welcome to the self-love of the cloistered nuns ;

it aroused their dormant energies,—they began to reflect—even to reason,—and the poison of self-indulgence mingled with the attempt at self-knowledge. Partially uneducated, totally ignorant of the world, and the world's ways, dazzled at once by the matter and the manner of these insidious works, each weak-minded and deluded sisterhood made its Abbess tremble on her cushioned chair. The fear of the *effects of evil* being removed, the evil itself ceased to exist for them as a sin, and became mere matter of expediency; and it was at length reserved for ridicule to effect that, in which the “most potent, grave, and reverend” Fathers of the Romish church had failed.

The “holy” satire contained in Pascal’s “Lettres Provinciales,” which Despréaux declared to be superior to all writings, either ancient or modern; and which Bossuet, when asked of what work he should have wished himself the author, had he not written his own, immediately named—the “Lettres Provinciales,” gave the first death-blow to the sect of the Molinists: and these were followed by the seven “Dialogues sur le Quiétisme” of La Bruyère,

which were not, however, printed until after his death ; and were then edited by the Abbé Dupin, who added two more “ Dialogues ” of his own, and published the work in Paris, in 1699, under the title of “ Dialogues Posthumes de la Bruyère sur la Quiétisme.”

The ridicule was so pungent, the satire so biting, that it required even less talent and wit than were bestowed upon it by the author to make it universally acceptable, save to the sectarians whom it attacked.

It is now extremely rare ; and it may not be amiss to give you an idea of its style, which I think you will agree with me displays more pleasantry than piety. Here is the *Pater Noster*, as assumed to be reformed by the Molinists—I will not even permit myself to translate it :—

“ Dieu, qui n’êtes pas plus au ciel que sur la terre et dans les enfers, qui êtes présent partout, je ne veux, ni ne désire que votre nom soit sanctifié ; vous savez ce qui nous convient : si vous voulez qu’il le soit il le sera, sans que je le veuille et le désire : que votre royaume arrive, ou n’arrive pas, cela m’est indifférent. Je ne

vous demande pas aussi que votre volonté soit faite en la terre comme au ciel ; elle le sera malgré que j'en aie ; c'est à moi à m'y résigner. Donnez-nous à tous notre pain de tous les jours, qui est votre grâce, ou ne nous le donnez pas ; je ne souhaite de l'avoir ni d'en être privé. De même, si vous me pardonnez mes crimes comme je pardonne à ceux qui m'ont offensé, tant mieux ; si vous m'en punissez, au contraire, par la condamnation, tant mieux encore, puisque c'est votre bon plaisir : enfin, mon Dieu, je suis trop abandonné à votre volonté pour vous prier de me délivrer des tentations et du péché."

I think you will allow that this specimen of controversial satire is more curious than edifying ; and I trust that you will pardon a long digression, whose only apology must be found in my desire to explain to you the nature of the works denounced by the two holy correspondents of the Grenoble library.

The next MS. was an extraordinary one to have been preserved among the papers of so pious a personage as a Prior of the Chartreuse. It is an anonymous lampoon, without date or address, written in a fine bold hand, upon half

a sheet of foolscap. It appeared to me sufficiently curious to be worthy of transcription, as it was evidently addressed to an ecclesiastic, and the superscription had been as evidently purposely torn away. Its very antiquity rendered it remarkable, as it naturally engendered a suspicion, that had it not been matter of interest to the learned and pious Dom le Masson, it would have been long since destroyed.

Here it is:—

Paris depuis longtemps contre vous se dechainé,
Et je crois que la cour en vit à vos dépens ;
Voulez-vous au public ne donner plus de peine,
Maurice, écoutez bien ces avis importans.
Condamnez vous enfin à faire residence,
Et n'embarrassez plus la cour,
De vostre importune présence—
On vous y voit et nuit et jour.
Contentez vous d'un benefice,
Ce point n'est pas indifferent,
En avoir dix c'est avarice,
Saint Augustin n'en eut pas tant.
Mais surtout plus de jeu, plus de galanterie,
Plus d'avanture, dont on vie—
Ce menage ne convient pas
Au plus saint de tous les estats.
Songez encore à vous défaire
De ce qui vous rend odieux,

Vostre ton de Samare, et vos airs de Corsaire,
 Vous donnent dans le monde un travers furieux,
 C'est à dire, Maurice, en langage vulgaire,
 Soyez humble, doux, gracieux,
 Ne songez plus à mordre sur personne,
 Et mettez à profit les avis qu'on vous donne,
 Il vous en coutera, mais vous en vaudrez mieux.

Is it not a singular *morceau* to be found
 among the papers of a monk ?

I shall quit Grenoble with regret ; and we
 have decided not to travel by the Alpine road,
 but to take the safer route by Valence and Avig-
 non. We have had cheering accounts of the
 decrease of cholera at Marseilles since we arrived
 here, which makes me less reluctant to return.

I am also anxious to see the letters that *must*
 be awaiting me.

Once more farewell.

END OF VOL. I.

LONDON :
 Maurice and Co. Fenchurch-street.

THE
RIVER AND THE DESART.

VOL. II.



R. Martin & Co. Lith. N. Longdon

ENTRANCE TO THE PORT OF NARSESILLIES.

Published by Henry Colburn, 21, Mark Lane, London. 1858

THE RIVER
AND
THE DESART:
OR,
RECOLLECTIONS
OF
THE RHÔNE AND THE CHARTREUSE.

By MISS PARDOE,
AUTHOR OF "THE CITY OF THE SULTAN,"
&c. &c. &c.

IN TWO VOLUMES.
VOL. II.

LONDON:
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THE RIVER AND THE DESART.

LETTER I.

DUPATY at Genoa — Apostrophe to Marseilles — Last Look at the Carthusian Desarts — Fertile Country — Moiran — Signs, Pious and Facetious — Apposite Aphorism of a Parisian — Value of Trifles in the Aggregate — Village of Feure — A Glimpse of England — Vinay — St. Marcellin — Romans — Striking Change of Landscape — Home !

Valence.

WHEN the celebrated Dupaty visited Genoa, he passed from her palaces to her galleys ; and how feelingly does he exclaim : — “ Gênes, tes palais ne sont encore ni assez élevés, ni assez étendus, ni assez nombreux, ni assez brillants ; on aperçoit tes galères.”

In like manner, though with greater selfish-

ness, despite what I declared at the conclusion of my last letter, as I approach Marseilles I too am tempted to apostrophize in my turn :—
“ Marseille, malgré ton beau ciel, et ta belle mer, je me souviens toujours de ton cholera ! ”

Thus far our journey has been delightful : we left Grenoble by the Voreppe road, and I turned a “ last, long, lingering look ” at the northward path, leading to the Grande Charreuse.

About a mile beyond Voreppe we arrived at the summit of a hill, whence we looked down on a country of extreme beauty—apple-orchards and vines clothed the valley, and many of the rocks to about mid-height ; walnut and olive trees, corn, lupin, and millet fields, were to be seen on every side ; and all the way thence to Moiran, the landscape, if possible, increased in richness.

I was amused by the signs of the wine-houses on this road, almost every one of them being

“Le grand St. François,” or “Le petit St. Jean-Baptiste,” or “Nôtre Dame de Piété;” save in one or two instances, where the proprietors had piqued themselves on being witty. Two of these were droll enough: each, as is common in this country, had a huge sun-dial painted above the door; the motto of the first was *Hora Bibendi*; while the second was poetical as well as facetious, and sported this distich:—

“Courier, avance !
Car il est plus tard que tu ne pense.”

These things, I am well aware, are trifles: but is it not by trifles that we collect the aggregate of national character?

An intelligent man, with whom I was in company at Paris, was conversing with me on the subject of travel, and I well remember, made the following remark:—“Madame, à force de trop voir, on ne voit rien; on s'accoutume à des choses étrangères, et on oublie que chez soi on ne les voit pas.”

I was immediately impressed with the truth of this aphorism : it is one which assuredly all travellers would do well to bear in mind. *En masse* mankind differ but little : the same passions, the same propensities, the same hopes, and fears, and pursuits, are to be found in every civilized country ; it is in the detail that nations exhibit the effects of climate, and education, and religion : the great chain of humanity is various only in the fashioning of its separate links.

A trifle frequently goes far in developing a character, as a touch will often bring out a portrait ; and thus observers of bagatelles, though they may be neither wits nor philosophers, will at least be guiltless of travelling from “ Dan to Beersheba,” and finding “ all barren.”

The little town of Moiran is poor, ill-built, and filthy ; but the valley which it dominates is so fertile, that the hemp frequently grows nearly to the height of the houses. Its commerce in floor-cloths is considerable ; and in consequence

of the extreme fertility of the neighbourhood, it is commonly entitled *le roignon de la Dauphiné*. The magnificent garden of M. Voisac is the only remarkable feature of the town.

I was particularly struck with the cheerfulness of the little village of Feure, about a league from Moiran ; all was light, cleanly, and picturesque : a sparkling stream turned the wheel of a mill, immediately by the side of the road, and then ran shimmering along in the sunshine, to hide itself in a thick wood of willows and alders. Upon several roofs gourds had been fancifully trained ; and the huge green and yellow fruit, and the large fan-like leaves, now lay basking in the hot sunshine on the glittering tiles.

The small town of Tullins, with its pretty promenade, reminded me in its immediate vicinity of England,—with its hedges of sloes, blackberries, and hips—its elder-trees, and its banks covered with wild thyme, and vocal with bees ; but as we advanced, the resemblance

ceased. The Alps closed in upon the valley, and among the vines huge tumuli, like the graves of giants, heaved up their rocky bosoms to the sky ; while at the base of the mountain chain, the Isère played in and out among the lesser heights like a spoiled child ; forming small islands, many of them clothed with verdure, and worthy to have been fairy colonies in the fanciful days of Oberon or Ariel.

We passed Vinay at a moment when its narrow streets were all alive with people returning from the mass, and making their way to the *Place*, where the pole was already decorated for the “ royal ” game of the *cible*, and surrounded by all the best marksmen of the neighbourhood, each emulous to carry off the prize.

A short distance further, and the handsome steeple of the church of St. Marcellin rose into the sky ; and having passed a new stone bridge, flung over the torrent which was leaping and bellowing in the gulph beneath us, we rattled

through an ancient Roman gateway, now fast going to decay, and at once found ourselves in the *Département de la Drôme*.

Thence to Romans the road is remarkably good, and the country charming; the Alps recede—the whole scene takes a milder character—the smiling and the lovely replace the stern and the magnificent—and it is as though Nature, weary of playing Beatrice, had decked herself in beauty and in youth to enact Juliet.

Having passed the ruined ramparts and turret-crowned gate of Romans, we crossed the Isère, which was hurrying on to fling itself into the Rhône at Tournon, and shortly afterwards arrived here, whence we shall reach Marseilles by Avignon and Aix.

On my arrival at *home*—but can this word lend itself to the mere residence of some few, fleeting months? Surely not—the *Dei Penates* build not their altars for such temporary worship: the very word “home” has associations

too holy to be thus lightly breathed,—thus idly appropriated. Can I call that spot “home” where your smile has never come? where the voice of maternal tenderness has never been echoed back by my own heart? Oh! no, no—kindness and affection have made a “*reposoir*” of my sunshiny southern chamber; a thousand little accustomed objects will greet me as I look around—but more than this is required to constitute “home:” there must be memories as well as smiles—duties as well as indulgences—there must be the chain of a thousand unbroken links, which we cast from us when we play the truant, and exchange “home” for the world.

Thus, then, I must recommence my paragraph, and amend my phrase, by saying, that when I arrive once more at Marseilles, I shall endeavour to make acquaintance with its lions, should it possess any—and where is there not something to be seen and learnt?—and meanwhile I bid you once more ‘farewell.’ Nor will

you regret that I do so, for my fatigue has prostrated my intellects; and to borrow a favourite *Provençal* expression, “ Je suis triste comme un bonnet de nuit.”

Commend me to your ‘charmed’ circle. I always retain, even amid my *tristesse*, taste enough to appreciate its attractions.

LETTER II.

Cemetery of Marseilles—Fatal Presentiment—Peculiar
Feature of the Spot—Cholera-Trenches—Frightful
Panic—Individual Heroism—Revolt in the Grave-
Yard—Graves of the Plague-Smitten—Affecting In-
scription.

Marseilles.

WHERE, think you, have I commenced my researches since my return hither? Even where my morbid feeling beckoned me. In the cemetery of the city!

Yes,—with the smouldering remains of the disease slowly extinguishing about me,—with the sound of the *tombereaux* yet ringing in my ears,—with visions of their death-freight still rising before my eyes,—I have been to look upon the resting-place of the thousands, who, during my brief residence in the south, have

been "laid to rest" in the burying-ground of Marseilles.

It is as though some fatal presentiment had warned the authorities of the town that Death would soon be busy with them ; for after having contented themselves for years with a necropolis whose narrow limits were altogether incompatible with the extent and population of the city, they have lately enclosed an immense space, of which the original burying-ground forms a very inconsequent portion ; having for this purpose purchased several *bastides*, the whole of which have been pulled down to give place to this City of the Dead, save one, which is now occupied by the Guardian of the Graves.

I should scarcely have considered this spot worthy of comment or description, did it not now present one feature peculiarly its own. In common with other continental grave-yards, it possesses its tombs wreathed with flowers, and planted with shrubs ; its tall dark cypresses, and

its low crosses of black wood, lettered with white. But, alas ! its distinguishing characteristic is one of horror rather than sadness—of dismay rather than resignation. .

Imagine a space of ground, somewhat exceeding six acres, devoted to the victims of one deadly malady ! At first each body was committed singly to the grave—it had its own little spot of earth—its own distinguishing cross—its own garland of *immortelles*. Affection and regret had yet a resting-place for the imagination—the tears of tenderness could be wept upon the tomb of the beloved and lost. But this “luxury of woe” endured not long ; the number of victims increased, not only daily, but hourly—the city streets became one vast funeral procession—the population which had thronged the walks now crowded the burial-place—and, too frequently, they who dug the graves died as they hollowed them, and shared them with their employers.

Others, as they plied their frightful task, recognised among the victims some friend, or relative, or parent; and with the partial insanity of despair, sickening at the sight of their own hurried and imperfect work, sought to violate the prouder tombs around them, in order to deposit within their recesses the remains of these who had been dear to them!

Then came the second and still more revolting stage of the hallucination of misery. It was on one of the most fatal days of the disease—a bright sunshiny morning of July, when sea and sky were blue and beautiful; and Nature, pranked out in her garb of loveliness, seemed to mock at human suffering; that suddenly as the city groaned with victims, those who had hitherto laden the death-carts, and carried them forth to burial, withdrew despairingly from the task, and literally left the dead to bury their dead.

For a brief interval the panic was frightful, the scorching heat of the unclouded sun,—the

rapid effects of the disease upon the bodies,—the difficulty of procuring substitutes for the revolting duty,—all conspired to excite the most intense alarm, lest the effluvia of putrefaction should be superadded to the miasma which was already feeding the malady.

In this extremity, the mayor of the town addressed himself to three young men, of whose courage and resolution he had a high opinion, and who instantly consented to devote themselves to the preservation of their fellow-citizens. The sexton, measuring and hollowing out his narrow space of earth, was replaced by workmen flinging up the soil from deep trenches, extending some hundred feet in length; while the courageous trio who had undertaken to transport the bodies, speedily filled up the common grave which was thus prepared for them.

The same prayer was murmured over a score; the tinkling of the same little bell marked the service performed for a hundred, whose sealed

ears heard not the sound ; and for awhile the work went on in silence. But that silence was at length rudely and strangely broken. Human nature, wrought up to its last point of endurance, acknowledged no authority—spurned at all duty,—and the tools of the workmen were cast down as they sprang out of the trenches, and refused to pursue their task.

It must have been a frightful scene, and one never to be forgotten, when the gleaming of bayonets was apparent within the walls of the grave-yard, and the troops stood silently along the edge of the trenches, partially heaped with dead ; compelling, by the mute eloquence of their arms, the labours of the living ! And this in a burial-place ! where all should be still, and solemn, and sacred !

The compulsory work was completed, and I stood yesterday upon this spot of frightful memories, beside the long, deep, common graves of upwards of four thousand of the plague-

smitten. The sun was shining upon them,—insects were humming about them,—on those which had been first filled up, the rapid vegetation of this fine climate had already shed a faint tinge of verdure; above them spread a sky of the brightest blue without a cloud: on one side the eye rested on the distant city, and the ear caught the busy hum of its streets; on the other, swelling hills and rich vineyards stretched far into the distance; but *they* lay there, long, and silent, and saddening,—the mute records of a visitation which has steeped the city in tears of blood.

It was awful, as I paused beside these vast tumuli, to remember that two short months had peopled them—to stand there, and to picture to myself the anguish and the suffering, the terror and the despair, amid which they were wrought; to know that within their hidden recesses were piled indiscriminately the aged and the young, the nursling and the strong man, the matron

and the maiden ; and, above all, it was affecting to trace the hand of surviving tenderness which had planted the record-cross, and the tributary wreath, upon some spot of the vast sepulchre, which was believed to cover the regretted one. I say *believed* : for who could measure with his eye that fatal trench, and make sure note of the narrow space where his own lost one lay, above, or beneath, or in the midst of that hour's victims ?

Would you endeavour to divest yourself of these revolting images, they are brought back upon you with tenfold force, as you pause at the termination of the trenches ; for there your eye falls on a tall black cross, crowned with *immortelles*, and bearing the inscription :—

Cholériques du Mois de Juillet.

You turn away with the blood quivering in your veins ; and a second cross, wreathed and

fashioned like the first, marks the graves of the

Cholériques d'Avout et Septembre.

And here, thanks to an all-gracious Providence ! the last-formed trench yet yawns hollow and empty for full two-thirds of its length. The Destroying Angel slowly furls his wings,—Death, glutted with prey, pauses in his work of devastation—

I do not think that I shall again have courage to enter the cemetery.

LETTER III.

Sincere Sympathy—Pilgrimage to Nôtre-Dame-de-la-Garde—Cours Bonaparte—Corinthian Column—Political “Alias”—Magnificent Scenery—Colony of the Catalins—Ascent to the Chapel—*Ex Votos*—Effigy of the Virgin—Absurd Exhibition—The Wooden Leg—Triumphal Arch—Puget the Sculptor—The Classical and the Incongruous—Singular Rock—Vintage-Dinner.

Belle de Mai, near Marseilles.

How greatly, how gratefully do I thank you for your charming letter, which I have this moment received !

I feel the sincerity of your sympathy, and am fully sensible to the kindness with which it is expressed. You ever intuitively obey the precepts of the wise king, who bade men forbear

to "pour vinegar upon nitre," or to "sing songs to a heavy heart." What the harp of David was to the demon of Saul, your letter has been to me.

You have received, you tell me, my first despatch from the Grande Chartreuse; I smiled at your apostrophe to the commodious bags of courteous diplomatists. Was it a merry comment on its unconscionable length?

I have already read your letter three times; the first from anxiety, the second from affection, and the third from admiration: thus I learnt progressively that you were well; that I was as dear to you as when we parted; and that you were as warm-hearted, and as fine-witted, as when I used to sit beside you at —, while you bandied philosophy with L——, metaphysics with L—— B——, and discussed theology with the benign and reverend Dean of —.

In those hours I was perhaps prouder of your friendship than I am at this moment ; but assuredly you were not so *dear* to me as you now are. You are one of those whom the amber of my affection would gather up, and surround, and protect from all worldly casualties, were such indeed in my power : as it is, I can only love you, and pray for you.

I yesterday made my purposed pilgrimage to the Chapel of Nôtre-Dame-de-la-Garde ; passing by the Cours Bonaparte, which, after having, during the restoration of the late royal family, borne the “alias” of the “Cours Bourbon,” has now resumed its original name ; upon the same principle as the Corinthian column, which crowns the hill at the extremity of its avenue of elms, has restored to its “high place” the bust of Napoleon, which now looks proudly down upon the city, in lofty scorn of the temporary usurpation of the XVIIIth Louis.

The four modest fountains of the "Cours" were pouring forth their sparkling waters ; the leafy branches of the elms were quivering in a light breeze ; the noble houses on either side the avenue were gleaming white in the sunshine ; and as we mounted the shrub-planted height, that leads by a gentle and winding path to the foot of the rock on which the fort is seated, the broad blue sea spread out its bark-studded bosom immediately before us ; while at our feet the busy city was mapped out in all its extent ; and its fine port ; its ancient Hôtel de Ville, elaborately ornamented by Puget ; its plain, substantial-looking college ; its densely-grouped dwellings, and its many steeples ; contrasted strikingly with the more distant landscape, whose hills and valleys were dotted over with the *twenty thousand* country-houses of its immediate vicinity.

I can compare the country round Marseilles to nothing which it more resembles, than a city

that has been scattered by a whirlwind. Collect the *bastides* together, and you have a second, and by no means inconsiderable town; they are unlike any suburbs that I ever remember to have seen.

On our left lay the entrance to the port, between the forts of St. John and St. Nicholas; and close beside the walls of the latter, we could distinguish a portion of the ruin of the ancient Abbey of St. Victor.

Another turn in the road as we ascended, brought us opposite to the islands of Pomègue, Ratoneau, and If; the little bay of Dieu-donné, crowded with vessels in quarantine; and the two small rocks, entitled *les Isles des Pendus*, which name they are supposed to have acquired from the fact of some executions having formerly taken place upon them; while in the distance the pigmy island of Planier, with its lofty lighthouse girdled by the blue waters, cut against the clear sky.

On the edge of the coast the singular colony of the Catalins, invited to Marseilles at the termination of the plague, which in 1720 devastated the city, and carried off nearly the whole of the native fishermen; still holds alike its station, and its privilege of transporting fish, duty free, to the market of the town. This little community continues to this day almost as distinct from the great mass of the native population, as on that of its establishment; its members intermarry among themselves, and they retain alike the garb and the dialect which they first brought to the shores of the Mediterranean.

The ascent of the rock is very precipitous, and the road rough and difficult; yet from twenty to thirty pilgrims may sometimes be seen ascending it barefooted, to pay their homage, and perform their penance to the very popular Madonna who gives her name to the chapel.

I had been told that the said chapel contained many fine paintings; and you may consequently imagine my disappointment when, on entering, I found myself in a gloom like that of twilight; surrounded by walls almost entirely covered with the vilest daubs, and the most trumpery engravings,—the votive offerings of bigotry and superstition.

Half a score of tall, slender wax-tapers were burning round the effigy of the Virgin, which is in the worst possible taste; being coarse and clumsy, and moreover incrustated with gold-leaf. It stands upon a gilt globe, and is hung all over with trinkets and chains, until it presents just the appearance of a figure intended to grace the counter of a jeweller. Among other appendages, the infant carries in its hand a small white silk reticule, fringed with gold-lace!

The tunny-fish was not visible, for being too large to serve as an ornament, it is only produced on occasions of ceremony.

I did not, as you will readily believe, waste many minutes at the shrine ; but began to look about me as well as I could in the partial darkness. In an obscure corner I found a lovely head of a Madonna, ruined by having been perforated by a nail. Over a small altar hung an indifferent "Descent from the Cross;" and behind a pillar another very dilapidated painting, of which, in the obscurity of the niche, I could not even seize the subject ; but the *ex votos* were multitudinous ! and never could I have conceived that, in the nineteenth century, such an exhibition of absurdity could be tolerated in a civilized country.

Imagine about five hundred little pictures framed and glazed, the least ridiculous among them being representations of different vessels, presented by their crews to secure a favourable voyage ; and others in a state of wreck, the votive offering of some fortunate survivor. Of the remainder, at least nine-tenths are occupied by the

same subject, differently treated,—the interior of a sleeping-chamber, with an invalid in bed, surrounded by mourners; and one child, or parent, or nurse, as the case may be, kneeling in prayer to the Virgin, who appears on a little blue cloud, sometimes brandishing a bunch of flowers much larger than her own head, and sometimes seated upon a globe. Many of these were inscribed, “*Ex voto pour la guérison d’un cholera,*” and dated in the months of July and August last.

But what think you of three little boys amusing themselves with gunpowder, by which one of them is knocked down; and while the second runs away, the third lifts up his hands in prayer to the Virgin, who appears on a cloud, whose intensity of tint is only excelled by that of the long scarf, which, falling from her shoulders, reaches all the way from her “skiey eminence” into the very smoke of the gunpowder ! Or of a man, crushed by the overthrow of a cart, whose invocation has called down his

patroness, who stands smiling upon her votary, on the summit of his own bales !

About fifty crutches also decorate the chapel, vowed to the Virgin in return for the cures performed through her agency ; and one wooden leg. What this latter offering might portend, it were impossible to decide ; but were I inclined to make a bad pun upon such a subject, I should say that it could be but a lame story.

On my return from Nôtre-Dame-de-la-Garde, I ascended to the roof of the Triumphal Arch, in order to have a view from the other side of the town, and to see the casts from which the statues and *bassi relievi* that decorate it had been executed. Could the celebrated Marseillaise sculptor, Puget, rise from his grave, I think he would be inclined to lie down in it again, rather than contemplate the modern enormities of his native city. He, whose soul was imbued with the classic and the sublime, would assuredly have ill brooked such an exhibition of incongruities as that on

which these good people have already expended some millions of francs, and the labour of several years.

The arch is surmounted on the side next Lyons by four statues : there is Strength, with his hand resting on the head of a lion ; Resignation, with a moody brow and a broken sword ; Prudence, trying the temper of his weapon ; and Devotedness attended by a pelican. What the other four are to be, on the Marseilles side, I know not ; but it is to be desired that they may be better, both in conception and execution, than those which are already completed. And now one word of the elaborately ornamented arch itself.

Imagine the Genius of Victory, endeavouring to crown with laurel a respectable-looking elderly gentleman in a cocked hat, and cavalry boots ; and a sister spirit offering to another hero, nearly similarly accoutred, and the tassels of whose sash are agreeably prominent, a bunch of olive

as large as a birch-broom. Then fancy an immense *basso relievo*, representing the departure of the Marseillaise volunteers for the battle of Fleury—one urchin beating a drum; another carrying a banner, upon which is inscribed “les Enfants de Provence;” an old woman with a head twice too large for her body; and, above all, groupes of military emblems, where the Roman helmet lies side by side with a modern French chako, and its straight peak and insignificant tuft; and a coat of mail is brought into juxtaposition with an infantry sword-belt!

And these things in a city where Puget lived and wrought! where his magnificent *alto-relievo* still decorates the Hôtel de Ville; and where his memory is dwelt on with such pride, that a singular rock, seen from my window, whose fantastic outline presents much the appearance of a human profile, is known only by the name of *la Tête de Puget*.

But I must hasten to conclude, (lest you

should imagine that the *cacoethes carpendi* is strong upon me to-day,) with the mention of a vintage-dinner, at which I have just assisted.

We were a numerous party; and when all had arrived, we passed from the drawing-room to a shady terrace over-arched with mulberry trees, whence we looked down upon the extensive vineyard, all alive with men, women, and children. Here, two sturdy peasants were bearing between them a huge basket of the blushing fruit—there, a pretty damsel was glancing up at the strangers from beneath her large hat, as she detached the grapes from their stem, and flung them into a heap beside her; at intervals one of the laughing children held up in triumph some unusually fine cluster of fruit to the admiration of its companions—all was bustle, mirth, and enjoyment, and the murmur of the merry voices came cheerfully to us as we overlooked the scene.

After awhile we quitted the terrace, and descended into the vineyard, when each guest,

cutting a bunch of grapes, carried it to the wine-press, where several sturdy peasants were already treading out the fruit: and on returning to the house, we sat down to a splendid repast, the centre of the table being occupied by an immense vase of grapes, wreathed with their own green and flexile branches—

Was it not *almost* Arcadian?

LETTER IV.

Cessation of the Cholera—Ceremonies of Condolence—
Funeral of a White Penitent—Twilight Procession—
The Eglise de la Major—Roman Gate—Ancient Monastery—Palace of Thermes—La Tourette—Fort St. John—Caryatides—Belle de Mai—The Duchesse d'Angoulême.

Belle de Mai.

THE last melancholy relic of the cholera has disappeared: the plague-flag flies no longer. All is again activity and excitement; and, above all, Death, which has been so long divested of its accustomed ceremonies, has resumed its etiquette of observances, and is once more become matter of pageant and courtesy.

Only a week ago the dead were carried to the grave with a mere priestly *cortège*, and even that scantily and hurriedly bestowed; now, printed

letters invite the friends of the deceased to pay him the last honours ; and in the hall of his late dwelling stands the table covered with black velvet, bearing the visiting-book, for the insertion of the names of those who, in this simple and unobtrusive manner wish to offer their condolence to the family.

As I was traversing the city yesterday, a party of White Penitents were on their way to inter one of their order, bearing in the midst of them the open bier destined to receive the body ; and I was induced to remain in the town until twilight, to witness a procession at which they were to assist. I never saw any thing more striking.

I occupied a window at the upper end of a street, which, from the summit of a gentle acclivity, commanded a distant view of the line of march. The houses were so lofty, as almost to deepen the twilight into night ; and as the profusely-drapered Penitents moved along by the

light of a few scattered tapers, their white garments fluttering in the wind, and their finely modulated voices pealing out a solemn chorus, the effect of the pageant was highly dramatic.

During the day I visited the Eglise de la Major, built on the scite, and partly with the materials, of an ancient temple of Diana. It is at once the cathedral of the city, and the most antique of its sacred edifices. But Marseilles is by no means remarkable for the beauty, interest, or splendour of its churches ; it is, on the contrary, celebrated for their want of attraction and even cleanliness ; and I never visited a large and opulent Catholic town where they were so totally destitute of grandeur and good taste.

When Constantine embraced Christianity, he caused the pagan temple, which was in a dilapidated state, to be converted into a church ; but since that period it has been so frequently destroyed and re-built, that it is a mere monument of the middle ages, retaining no vestige

of its original purpose. It is low and gloomy, and contains nothing remarkable beyond its elaborately-carved organ, on which all the figures and caryatides are the size of life ; a very curious baptismal font ; and a chapel, whose altar, ornamented, or perhaps I should rather say disfigured, by sculptures, is decorated with the effigies of St. Lazarus, Ste. Magdalene, and Ste. Martha. The *custodière* of the cathedral was very anxious to open the shrine, and, for the consideration of a franc or two, to regale our heretic eyes with a sight of the so-called skeleton of St. Lazarus : but we declined the privilege.

All the chiselling throughout the church is of the eleventh century ; but its architecture is a medley which baffles all classification.

Near the cathedral stands the old Roman gate, called *la Joliette*, by which Julius Cæsar entered the city ; and which owes its partial preservation to the circumstance of its serving

as a bureau for the collection of customs. It is mouldering, and eaten by the keen sea-air; but some faint remains of sculpture, and portions of an illegible inscription yet exist; as well as a corroded ring, which, it is asserted, assisted to support the portcullis when it was raised to admit the conqueror. It now commands the approach to the Lazaretto and Quarantine-ground; but the moat which once separated the two barriers has been filled up.

I next visited an ancient monastery, now converted into store-houses. Not even the chapel has been respected; and what is sufficiently startling in a Catholic country, while the tessellated pavement is cumbered with goods, some of the statues actually remain in their niches, and the walls are yet covered with emblems and inscriptions. The entrance, which is now slightly partitioned off from the street by a fence of boards, still preserves all its original character, and is stately and well designed.

Our next point was the Palace of Thermes ; where a few slight constructions, erected on the foundations of the original edifice, are occupied by a cooper, and over-strown with the attributes of his trade. Association alone gives any interest to the spot ; as, with the exception of some arches in what now serve as the cellars of the house, there is no Roman remain to attract the stranger, or to gratify the antiquary.

Passing along the mouldering rampart-wall from the cathedral, we reached the esplanade of *La Tourette*, which owes its name to some round towers that in times by-gone occupied its space. It was on this spot that, during the great plague, a pit was dug to receive the victims ; and it is here that all military executions now take place.

Passing rapidly along, we arrived at Fort St. John ; and stood for awhile gazing on the tower in which, during the period of the Revolution, Philippe Egalité and his brother were

immured ; and then, descending the hill from the Boulevards to the port, we bestowed five minutes on the mouldering Caryatides of Marseilia, the founder of the city, which supports one of the buttresses of the tower, and concerning which the common people have a tradition, by no means comfortable in its present dilapidated condition ; namely, that when the outline shall fail to be palpable to the eye, the city will become the prey of a foreign power.

You will allow that the ghostly procession, of which I made mention at the commencement of my letter, was a very appropriate finale to the lions of the day ; and I returned, wearied alike in body and in spirit, to my uncle's *campagne* of Belle de Mai—Is not the name in itself a pastoral romance?—to give you a brief record of my proceedings.

This was my first visit to the old town,—for Marseilles ancient and modern are quite distinct,—and should be my last, were it not that I

am promised a peep at the dungeon of Philippe Egalité, and the fastnesses of the Château d'If, all of which are generally sealed books to strangers; and which I am, of course, comparatively anxious to explore.

I am told that one of the first things which the Duchesse d'Angoulême expressed a wish to see, when she visited Marseilles, was the dungeon of Fort St. John. It would be curious to attempt an analysis of the feeling that prompted her Royal Highness,—it must have been far deeper than the curiosity which carries me to these unsavoury niches.

LETTER V.

Origin of Marseilles—Phocian Colonists—Aboriginal
Celts—Fertile Country—Greek Hymn.

Belle de Mai.

MARSEILLES has acquired a new interest in my eyes since I have discovered that the birth of the city is almost as great and as classical a fable as that of Venus herself; and that its origin is covered by the fancy-teeming mists of ages.

It is said to be cotemporary with Rome itself, or with the times of the Tarquins; and surely this share of antiquity should suffice to its respectability, even although it cannot thus rival several of the cities of Narbonnese Gaul; nor be written on the same page in the volume of the past, with either Arles or Segoregium.

The most pleasant chronological tradition saith, that some Greek exiles, in search of a new home, where they might escape the horrors of the civil war then deluging their beautiful but unhappy land, arrived by chance, or rather were driven by the winds, to the fair shore on which Marseilles now stands.

They were agriculturists, who were well able to appreciate all the advantages of the locality ; and as they entered the sheltered port, and saw how fair a landscape lay spread out beyond, set in a frame-work of what were then richly-wooded mountains, they at once resolved to abandon their galleys, and to take possession of this new Arcadia.

The era is stated to have been 600 years before Christ ; and the territory on which the exiles landed was at that period possessed by the Lygien-Celts, who offered no opposition to the wishes of the Greek adventurers, but welcomed them warmly to their shores ; and

through Nonnus, their chief, invited them to fix their colony among them.

The strangers were self-exiled Phocians, the children of sunshine and of song. Born beneath an Ionian sky, their tastes, their habits, and their manners all alike required a balmy atmosphere, a bright sea, and a flower-teeming land. They had inhabited Phocia; they came from Thessaly; they had bathed their brows in the pellucid waters of Sperchius and Peneus; and they had braided their dark hair with blossoms amid the classic groves of Tempé, and under the mighty shadows of Pelion and Ossa. They could not have lived on an ungenial soil; and here they found a laughing country, rife with vegetation, and fresh and glowing as it sprang from the Almighty hand.

At that period, pursues the legend, the mountain-chain which stretches far away eastward, and then bends back circularly towards the west, was crowned with majestic forest-

trees; since prostrated by storms and hurricanes, or felled for purposes of traffic; while at the base of these picturesque and richly-wooded heights, lay green and sunny valleys, gay with wild flowers, and balmy with a thousand odours.

The fruits that the exiles loved were here also; and as they wandered from glade to glade, they felt as though they had abandoned nothing of their beloved Greece, save her intestine troubles. Here, all was peace; and while the maidens stooped to collect the blossoms of which the lap of Nature was full to overflowing, the youths sauntered in admiration beneath the laden boughs. The Athenian olive grew beside the fig of Argos; the Arcadian poplar towered above the classic rose-laurel of Eurotas; the majestic tamarind tree overshadowed the snow-dropping acacia; and many a streamlet sang on its way, as it escaped through the long grass and the wild-flowers, to fling itself into the sunshiny sea beyond.

If it be a fable that thus the city was founded ; or rather, that to this band of adventurous Phocians it was indebted for its origin, it is pretty and poetical enough ; and it is easy to imagine, that as the sun set upon the exiles on the day of their arrival, they would group themselves beside a clear stream in one of those sweet valleys, and offer up to their gods the melodious hymning of their gratitude ! The dark-eyed maidens, lifting their high, pale foreheads to the sinking light, and catching thence a gleam of glory well suited to their proud loveliness ; and their companions already glancing anxiously around, in search of such secluded and lovely spots as might seem to them worthy to be selected for the temples of their Divinities.

And as the day-god sank to his ocean-rest, can you not fancy that some strain, half piety, half poetry, would swell on the night-air, and awaken the woods with melody ? And will

you forgive me, if I venture to give the fancy words, and to put into the mouths of these self-expatriated wanderers some such invocation as the following?

GREEK HYMN.

Neptune ! to Thee we pray—
God of the stormy sea !
Who hast smoothed for us the watery way,
Where the tempest wanders free :
Our galleys are moored in the peaceful bay,
And our spirits rise to Thee !

Ceres ! who o'er the land
That to our hearts is dear,
Dost scatter around with a lavish hand
All thy glories, year by year ;
For us be they shed on this stranger strand—
Oh, hear us, Goddess, hear !

Venus ! whose radiant star
Now sparkles through the night,
Forget not that we thy children are,
Fair Goddess of Love and Light !

We hail the silver sign,
As it shines o'er yon tranquil sea ;
For it links our spirits once more to Thine,
And in exile tells of Thee !

But I must not run through the mythological calendar ; and therefore return to sublunary things at the very extremity of my paper, to beg of you to take as lively an interest in my Phocian colonists as I myself have done ; for I intend to devote another letter to the same subject, in order to imbue you with a proper respect for the ancient city of Marseilles ; and thus ensure for all my details, that welcome which you have ever bestowed on the ramificatory epistles of your rambling correspondent.

LETTER VI.

Temples of the Gods—Early Wars—Increase of the Colony—Palmy Days of the City—Wise Laws—Neptune *versus* the Virgin—Ancient and Modern Edifices—Visions of the Past—Villas *versus* Bastides.

Belle de Mai.

Soon rose the temples of the gods among the neighbouring groves. Beneath the shadow of a cluster of giant pines, upon an eminence overlooking the wide waste of sea, towered the shrine dedicated to Neptune. Minerva found a fitting retreat amid the olive trees of which she was the patroness; while Pan and Ceres, Venus and Diana, had each a lovely spot sacred to their worship.

But with the power of the infant colony grew the jealousy of the aborigines, whom they had

already far outrun both in physical force, and in social luxury: their friends degenerated into foes; and the Greeks were compelled to retain by strength of hand what had been so freely given. Their utter extermination had been vowed by the Celts; but the struggle had been too long delayed to injure them, and the attempt of their enemies proved abortive.

Gradually the primitive gracefulness of the Phocian settlement wore away; the silence of its sacred woods, which had been so long broken only by the harmonious language of their lost land, re-echoed ere long, as the colony increased, to a mongrel dialect, half Greek, half Gallic; the result of their awakening commerce, and communion with the neighbouring cities of Narbonne, Nismes, and Arles.

Their little galleys visited every inhabited spot on the borders of the gulf, and traded alike with the Italian, the Spaniard, and the Gaul; their ambition naturally grew with their means

of indulging it; and then it was that they erected those proud temples of the snowy marble of Carrara, which now exist only in tradition, or in rare and precious fragments treasured in the cabinets of the antiquary.

The palmy days of Marseilles speedily followed. It became a metropolitan city; and founded in its turn Antipolis, Nicea, Agatha, Citharista, and several other towns now no longer in existence. It rivalled alike Athens and Carthage, Tyre and Sidon; its streets were girdled with ramparts, and its port crowded with shipping. It resisted successfully several attacks from the Carthaginians, who had become jealous of its rapidly-increasing commerce; and during the struggle, which was a long one, it augmented its strength, and added to its importance.

Next in the list of its enemies was Athens: and the Athenian arms were for a time more successful than those of Carthage; until van-

quished by Philip at Cheronea, they abandoned all hostile intentions, and left Marseilles to triumph once more in its impunity.

The wisdom and amenity of her laws encouraged strangers and foreigners to entrust alike their persons and their property to the safe-keeping of the delegated authorities. Even Cicero bore witness to their justice and careful administration ; and Marseilles, with her republican government, her six hundred senators, her gorgeous temples, and her far-reaching commerce, became the Gallic Athens—the ally of Imperial Rome, and the bold, though unsuccessful enemy of Annibal.

According to one of the old writers, the present city, handsome though it be, is but a fleshless skeleton compared with the Marseilles of those days ; and, sooth to say, he may have been right ; for the change yet to be traced in many instances, is by no means to the advantage of the existing state of things.

When I look at the bleak, arid, tree-denuded rock, now crowned with the fortress-chapel of Nôtre-Dame-de-la-Garde, and listen to the assurance that it was from that very spot that the trident, the conch-shells, and the tributary tritons of Neptune glanced from among the stately pines which fringed the mountains; receiving from afar-off the salutation of the home-speeding mariner, even as the popular Madonna who inhabits it to-day is greeted by her marine votaries, I confess myself Pagan enough to regret its scenic beauties.

Nor am I less inclined,—as I pause at the portal of the gloomy and obscure Eglise de la Major, now on the verge of the shore, and remember that on this spot, then the very centre of the city, stood the graceful temple of Diana, with its fine colonnade resting on a range of light Ionic pillars, facing the sea, and approached by an avenue of gigantic tamarind trees; while all around, in its immediate vici-

nity, were scattered finely-chiselled groupes, surrounded by appropriate attributes of the Divinities whom they represented,—to repine that the locality changed its nature as utterly as the creed; and that the proud pile dedicated to the Hunter-Goddess has been so meanly replaced, when the inspiration was so much more glorious!

How I love to conjure up a vision of the past; and to rekindle in idea the ruddy fires on the magnificent shrine of *Venus Pyrrhena*, which were wont on the calm nights of summer to glance in ruby-tinted light far across the sea; and to create anew, in my mind's eye, the classic groupes embarking and disembarking from the light skiffs, moored under the deep shadows of the tamarind trees that stretched downward to the lip of the moon-lighted waves; pilgrims from Cape Colonna to the altar of Venus, themselves often as lovely as the goddess they invoked!

Often am I tempted to sigh, when—after indulging in such a day-dream as this, and peopling the space about me with picturesque forms; priests in their white and flowing robes, and priestesses crowned with bays, and glorious in the pride of their pure beauty; mailed forms, where grace contended with strength; and maidens, deep-eyed and ruby-lipped, such as are now seen only on the canvass of one or two of the old masters,—the illusion suddenly vanishes; and the bright shapes, and the scenic pageant, fade away; leaving me nothing in exchange but dingy walls, stiff sentinels, and squalid beggars; (for this spot is by no means the court quarter of the city!) while for the gleaming temple of Diana, the illuminated shrine of Venus, and the wonder-working altar of Jupiter, modern innovation has offered no more meet equivalent than the sombre-looking church of the Archbishopric, the factory-like Seminary, and the loathsome Abattoir!

I have already remarked on the peculiarity of the environs, where twenty thousand *bastides* are dotted over the neighbouring plains like a dislocated city. They are but the vulgarized successors of the elegant Grecian villas, wherein the opulent and the luxurious of old were accustomed to while away the sultry hours of summer, lounging on their divans covered with the costly stuffs of the Levant, pillowed among cushions of down, and surrounded by all the indulgences of their loved and regretted Greece.

Then, each light and elegant edifice boasted on its seaward side an open portico supported by columns, where the fresh breeze played joyously among the orange and rose-trees; or fluttered through the leafy boughs of the sweet-scented limes and cedars. The sound of the lute, and the voices of women made the air vocal; and in those beautiful retreats were poured forth libations in honour of the fair-haired Amphytrite, the daughter of the *Ægean*;

to Venus, within sight of her own sunny sea ; to the Graces, amid a scene lovely enough to have been their birth-place ; and to every joyous Divinity who could be propitiated by an offering of peace and beauty.

Now, the Grecian villas have degenerated into bastides ; the divans remain, but they are mere comfortless-looking lounges for the indolent or the suffering ; the music of the lute is hushed ; the flower-crowned and sandalled nymphs of the olden time are replaced by languid beauties with “unkempt tresses” and heel-less slippers ; and for all banquet they boast the *poule-au-pot*, which is proverbial throughout the province, and shunned by all save some desperate diner-out, driven to extremity.

Here and there, indeed, among the thousands scattered round the city, some few may yet be seen, where comfort, elegance, and liberality still greet the visitor ; but these are principally inhabited by strangers ; or are the occa-

sional *pied-à-terre* of some wealthy merchant, who loves at times to dream away an hour, within sight of the far-spreading Mediterranean, and under the shadow of his own fig-tree. Taking them generally, however, the bastides are fit only for the purpose to which they are commonly applied,—that of a Sunday retreat for the town-worn and weary tradesmen of the city; retaining no trace whatever of their original classic beauty.

At the foot of the eastern side of the rock, known as that of *Nôtre-Dame-de-la-Garde*, once lay the Necropolis of *Marseilles*; an extensive cemetery formed into streets precisely after the manner of that at *Herculaneum*; and this city of the dead, with its groves of cypress, and its monumental tumuli, was overlooked by many of the villas to which I have just alluded; and resounded on days of feast and festival with the clashing of the cymbals, and the songs of joy,

with which the Pagan devotees greeted their myriad gods.

But I must have done with past times ; or you will begin to apprehend that I design to inflict on you a Life of Cheops, or some private anecdotes of the Court of King Priam !

LETTER VII.

The Cash-book of Francis I.—The Deserter—M. Jaufret—Simplicity of true Genius—Simile of Auguste la Fontaine.

TRULY, this life is as incongruous as the private cash-book of Francis I., of which I have just been glancing over the items, in a clever work edited by MM. L. Cimber and Danjon, the fourth volume of which has just appeared ; and I strongly recommend it to your attention. It is entitled, *Archives curieuses de l'Histoire de France, depuis Louis XI. jusqu' à Louis XIII.*; and is a collection of historical facts compiled from authentic documents in the Bibliothèque Royale.

Here is a terrible digression ! Produced too in my first sentence by an idle simile ; but I

pray you to bear with me, for I am sick at heart to-day.

I have just returned from the city ; and as I passed up the Allées de Meilhan, (the mall of Marseilles,) the drums of one of the regiments garrisoned there were beating, and a crowd of idlers were following in the track of the military, who were returning from a field-day. All was laughter, and coquetry, and mirth ; and as the noisy throng approached, we turned down a by-street to avoid the contact ; and, by so doing, came upon another very different procession.

Marching slowly and silently, six soldiers with fixed bayonets surrounded a seventh, who walked bare-headed in the condemned dress of coarse grey cloth. He was a young man, apparently not more than three-and-twenty years of age ; sallow, sad, and emaciated ; and sentenced to the *boulet* for five years, for having attempted to desert ; and he was now making the accustoméd tour of the city, with his little cap in

his hand, to collect the donations of the charitable.

The punishment of the *boulet* consists in hard labour on the fortifications of a distant town, with a cannon-ball attached by a chain to the right leg. How my heart bled for him ! This poor youth had, perhaps, been torn away, by the odious system of “drawing” for the army ; from an aged mother, who depended upon his exertions for support,—or a sister who had no other protector,—or a mistress, soon to have been a wife, and left broken-hearted at the very threshold of happiness. He had made an effort to return to them—to toil for them—and he had failed ; and now, for five long years, he must submit to captivity, to hardship, and worse, far worse, to degradation.

To a high heart the sting was in the last reflection ; and if I have any, even the slightest, skill, in reading countenances, he felt it bitterly ! Not once did he raise his eyes, save

when the mite of the sympathizing fell into his cap; and then it was with a crushed and joyless expression, truly pitiable.

We encountered him again in the Place Royale; his painful pilgrimage was nearly over, and a crowd of women followed him, who stopped the passers by with a wailing cry of "*Pitié, pitié, pour le pauvre prisonnier !*"

What a heart must that have been which did not pity him !

Having been favoured with an introduction from the C— de H— to M. Jauffret, one of the Editors of the "Methodical Dictionary of the Natural Sciences, Medicine, Rural Economy, Botany, the Practical Arts," &c.; the friend of Cuvier, D'Angers, Sicard, Fourcroy, Mde. Campan, and *id genus omne*, I paid him a visit at his apartments, which are attached to the Bibliothèque, where he reigns supreme.

I had been told that he was a marvel of courtesy and kindness: one of his admirers indeed

went so far as to assure me, that he was *un petit bon Dieu* ! And assuredly never were expectations more completely realized than mine, when I had made his acquaintance.

On my entrance, a little, benevolent-looking old man, with a flaxen wig, much too small to conceal the venerable grey hairs beneath it, came forward to meet me with a smile which was the very perfection of welcome. The library was, he told me, all in confusion, as they were profiting by the recess at the college, to dust and arrange the books ; but he was prepared to introduce to me his private collection of autograph letters, many of which were extremely interesting. I preferred however at this, our first interview, to sit beside him, to listen to his delightful conversation, and to see his eye lighten with animation as he spoke of the wits and philosophers of the century, his own contemporaries and friends.

As I bent towards him, fearful of losing a

word, for he never speaks above a whisper, I could scarcely believe that the unpretending and simply-mannered old man, who was thus giving up to me hour after hour of his valuable time, could indeed be Jauffret the antiquary, the numismatist, the poet—the author, in short, of about fifty volumes. What a lesson for self-sufficient mediocrity !

It was not until after many efforts that I brought him to speak of himself ; and when he at length did so, he dwelt rather on his life as a man, than on his career as a writer ; talked of his early struggles to support his young family, and his gentle wife,—of the high mental endowments of his eldest son,—of his collegiate honours ; showed me the pretty ballad which he wrote on the birth of his boy, and which was set to music by the celebrated Meyhel ; and ultimately presented me with a volume of his Fables, all of which have been very successful.

Of him it may be truly said,

“ In wit a man, simplicity a child :”

for while he uttered no sentence that did not convey instruction, he did it with that quiet and unconscious air, which betrayed that study was “ his being’s end and aim,”—the very vital air of his existence.

In a day or two I visit him again, to see—I scarce know what—medals, and sarcophagi, and Roman vases, and mummies, and a thousand other objects of *vertù*.

He has promised me a feast, and has desired me to be with him early. I shall need no second bidding.

I am now looking daily for news of you and yours. I remember, in one of Auguste la Fontaine’s clever German romances, to have met with an idea which I thought charming—“grief and joy are the night and day of existence.” Do not forget this. You know that you can always create “day” for me by the very sight of your hand-writing—and, alas ! we have so much

“night” forced upon us by the world, that we may well insist that it is “in the bond” for our friends continually to play Aurora for us, and dispel the darkness.

Have I not favoured you with a sentence which smacks of the Minerva press? *Passe pour cela.* Only act upon the inference.

LETTER VIII.

Growth of Intimacy—New Acquaintance—The Marquis and the Mummy—Cabinet of Medals—Relics—Council-chamber—Library—Voltaire on the Academy of Marseilles—Monastic Remains—Cabinet of Natural History—Antiquities—Museum—Autograph Letters—Voltaire in 1739—Florian and Boisgelin—Literary Correspondence.

How different is the growth of intimacy with different individuals. In some cases it is a minuet, in which a world of time is lost in bowing and curtsying; at others a joyous *contre danse*, where you are fairly hurried into good fellowship before you have time to take breath. I seem to have known M. Jauffret a thousand years!

Such a morning as I have spent! A morn-

ing in which I have made two new and charming acquaintance. The first is the Marquis de Mont-Grand, who was for many years mayor of Marseilles, and who presented to the city its superb collection of antique medals ; and better still, an *homme de lettres*, who has recently given to the world an elegant translation of *I Promessi Sposi* of Manzoni. The second is no less a personage than the Master of the Robes to the King of Thebes ! I paid my respects to him as gracefully as I could, on my knees ; while he lay very tranquilly in the interior coffin of the three which have preserved his mummy thus faithfully, to the great gratification of the curious of the nineteenth century.

The collection of ancient medals fills a hundred cases, and has been scientifically arranged by M. Jauffret. Many among them are of great value and interest ; but as I am no connoisseur in numismatics, I was infinitely more delighted with a series of modern ones, pre-

sented by Napoleon to M. de St. Vincent, and designed to illustrate his own meteor-like career. These latter are exquisitely cast in bronze, and of the last beauty and finish. One among them, representing the conquest of Egypt, has a fine head of the Emperor crowned with lotus-flowers on the one side, and on the other the conqueror in a triumphal car, drawn by four dromedaries. The reverse of a second, struck on his marriage with Maria Louisa, and bearing the two heads on its superior side, is elegantly imagined. It is a Cupid running away with the thunderbolts of Jupiter.

The series has been continued since his death, and now includes every leading incident of his life: and how, think you, that his admirers have depicted the retreat from Moscow? Truly the idea was worthy of the great mind from which it emanated—that of the Baron Denon. A genius, representing the French armies, is surrounded by heaps of slain, the immolated of

his mighty arm ; the city is in flames in the distance ; and he is slowly retreating before the Demon of Frost, who is pouring upon him from a cloud which he drives along, the concentrated snows of centuries. Is it not finely imagined ?

From the cabinet of medals, which is also rich in works on the science, I descended to a small vault, wherein are preserved the reliques of old Marseilles. In widening the port, the labourers excavated to so great a depth, as to reveal the remains of the three ancient cities : the first of which the traces were laid bare, was the original Marseilles of the French ; the next was that of the Romans ; the last that of the Greeks. What a singular spectacle ! I was surrounded by Grecian inscriptions, yet perfectly legible—Roman urns containing human ashes—vases filled with human bones—and, lastly, the narrow grave-stones, rudely carved with the cross, which covered the bodies of the first Christians who made an abiding-place of this disputed city.

I am not in a mood to moralize; therefore we will pass at once to the cheerful council-chamber of the Academy; which is adorned with busts and portraits, among the latter that of M. Jauffret himself; a few antique curiosities; and a score of well-cushioned chairs; and from thence an open door brings us into the library.

Somewhat limited in its dimensions, and plain even to simplicity, the Marseillaise library contains only about 50,000 volumes, and 1300 MSS. nor am I aware that it boasts any thing remarkably curious; though its folio copies of standard works are many of them perfect specimens of typographical excellence. Among others, I particularly remarked a Plutarch, and a Tacitus,—that Tacitus who tells us, that in the time of Agricola “Marseilles was equally remarkable for the polished civilization of Greece, and the severe economy of provincial manners.”

I wonder what he would say now !

Before I proceed further with the contents of the library, I may as well mention a fact which is not without interest. The *Collège Royale*, and the Academy of Marseilles, of which *par parenthèse* Voltaire once said, with that biting irony that eats into the memory like rust into metal, "*C'est une fille sage, et qui n'a jamais fait parler d'elle*," are both under one roof; and the spacious building which contains them was formerly a Bernardine monastery

One door of entrance, over which is written the attractive word, "Museum," opens from the *Marché des Capucins*, and gives ingress to the Cabinet of Natural History, the Library, the Gallery of Pictures and Antiquities, the Academy, the Cabinet of Medals, and the Halls of Drawing and Architecture: The library occupies the corridor, from whence smaller lateral apartments branch off to the right and left, the upper end being occupied by the *cabinet* of the librarian, in which are preserved the numerous

cartoons of engravings, and illustrated works in folio, belonging to the establishment.

Here, also, as at Grenoble, I found many Carthusian manuscripts, some of them of great beauty.

At the other extremity of the corridor, on a raised stand surrounded by a slight rail, is a plan of the city and port of Marseilles, cut in cork with singular accuracy. It is a recent acquisition, for which the academy paid the artist 8,000 francs.

The Cabinet of Natural History is situated immediately under the library; it has only been established since 1819; and the very limited space appropriated to it, more than suffices as yet for its contents.

The Cabinet of Antiquities is a species of ante-room to the museum; and contains a few tombs, agricultural implements, urns, and fragments of Roman architecture and sculpture; and some interesting remains of the first ages

The first is a sketch of Voltaire, in the year 1739, by the Chevalier d'Angers, brother to the celebrated Marquis of that name, himself a writer of no mean reputation, and author of a work on the Crusades. Remember who and what the man was, who thus unconsciously sat for his picture, and I think you will smile at the quiet *laissez aller insouciance* of the limner !

“Voltaire, qui a connu mon frère en Hollande, vint hier me voir,—nous dinons ensemble Jeudi. C'est un très bon homme, sans façons, et sans fadeur. Nous avons lié un espèce d'amitié dans les deux heures que nous avons passées ensemble.”

Fancy the man *sans façons et sans fadeur* !

The second autograph which I shall mention is curious, and unusually characteristic. It is the rough draught of a letter written by Florian, while he was a prisoner in the Bastille, to Boisgelin ; which accompanied the MS. of his

Guillaume Tell. This epistle is beyond all parallel the most violent effort after harmony of expression that can be conceived ; and I do not exaggerate when I tell you, that for every word which is retained in its original position, twenty are effaced or transposed.

I felt pained as I deciphered it; which I did not accomplish without considerable difficulty, owing to the multitudinous interlineations, that a man of Florian's genius should have condescended to so much self-praise, and such overweening adulation, even to recover his liberty. The character of his correspondent rendered the thing still more pitiable,—the author of *Estelle*, the Pastoral poet, crouching before the revolutionary leader,—the bard of simplicity and peace, wreathing his circlet of bays around the *bonnet-rouge* ! And yet, how was it possible to retain a spark of anger against an incarcerated minstrel, who complained that he had “*nul livre—presque pas d'encre ou de papier* ;” and

who gave a touching proof of the veracity of his assertion, by drawing out upon the margin of his letter, a list of wearing apparel prepared for the laundress !

Le mauvais métier que celui de poète !

If the third and last specimen amuse you as much as it did me, you will thank me for it ; but I must first put you *au courant du fait*. Bourguard, Cuvier, and Fourcroy, were associated with several other *savans* in the compilation of the “ Methodical Dictionary,” of which I made mention in my last letter. Fourcroy had, in a learned article on the word *amalgame*, written *amalgame native* : Bourguard disputed the propriety of this, and declared the proper gender to be masculine, and the consequent manner of rendering it to be *amalgame natif* ; and he mentioned his objection to M. Jauffret. The latter declined any contest with Fourcroy, and accordingly Bourguard took up a pen which lay near him, and scribbled on a scrap of paper :—

“TO FOURCROY.

“I do not admit your reading,—*amalgame natif* is the correct version.

BOURGUARD.”

A short time only elapsed ere Fourcroy entered on the scene; the billet of his brother *littérateur* was put into his hands,—and here is his hasty and graphic reply; I say graphic, for when you have run your eye over it, you know the man.

“TO BOURGUARD.

“It is twenty-five years, my dear friend, since I have said *amalgame native*,—for more than forty, the Academy has said it. It is a bad orthography, that of *Buffon* and of *Hauy*. A Professor who has lectured to a great portion of France,—a Writer who has been translated into all languages,—may consider himself a sort of authority—and I think myself such; therefore I wrote the article *amalgame* expressly to correct that fault.

FOURCROY.”

“5 Brumaire, An. 12.

Can you not see him fling down the pen ?
And do you not at once acknowledge his claim
to the authority he arrogates ? As for the mere
spectator who contemplates this combat of wits,
he can only exclaim—*Indocti discant, et ament
meminisse periti !*

LETTER IX.

Life of M. de Menneval—Anecdote of the First Consul—The Emperor and his Secretary.

YOU of course know, that during the Consulate of Napoleon M. le Baron de Menneval was his private secretary, but you perhaps do not know his history ; and as I am about to relate to you an anecdote told by his sister to M. Jauffret, with which he is connected, I will give you a hasty sketch of his life.

M. de Menneval was the son of a baker in the Rue Mazarine at Paris, with an only sister depending on him for support. For a time he worked steadily in his bake-house ; but after awhile he felt within himself a mental craving, which his plebeian calling did not tend to

satisfy ; and every hour which he could steal from his business he spent at the Mazarine Library.

The want, as may be easily understood, was like jealousy ; it grew by what it fed on : and at length he gave himself up so entirely to literary pursuits and study, that he attracted the notice of the celebrated Palissot, to whom he soon revealed his history.

Palissot, after having long observed the youth, bade him diligently pursue his studies, and promised to use his best exertions to procure him some public situation ; nor was he unmindful of his pledge, for he soon afterwards mentioned him to François de Neufchateau, then Minister of the Interior, and a man of taste and letters.

The minister declared himself interested in the young student, but regretted that he had so many more candidates than places, that it was at that moment impossible for him to meet

the views of the applicant. Some months passed away, and the ambitious De Menneval felt all hope die within him ; and in this mood he wrote a respectful but gloomy and despairing letter to Palissot, thanking him for the service which he had sought to render him ; and declaring that as he found every avenue to honourable advancement closed against him, and as he felt himself utterly unable to follow the mechanical calling of his father, he had determined on throwing himself into the Seine, and terminating at once his existence and his sufferings.

There was an air of sincerity, a concentration of melancholy in the wording of the letter, which decided Palissot on making a final and an immediate effort to reconcile him to life ; and he instantly hurried, with the open paper in his hand, to the minister, who struck by the energy of the young man's disdainful despair, made out, without delay, his appoint-

ment to an inconsequent situation under the government ; and accompanying it with a promise to Palissot, that he would not lose sight of his *protégé*, he bade him hasten to save a life which might one day prove a valuable one to his country.

De Menneval was saved ; and shortly afterwards Joseph Bonaparte requiring a private secretary, he was recommended and accepted. But fortune was not yet weary of befriending him ; for no very considerable time elapsed, ere Napoleon applied to his brother to procure for him a well-educated and perfectly confidential person to act in the same capacity.

After the hesitation of a moment, Joseph replied that he possessed a treasure in his own secretary, but that he would not withhold him from the First Consul in the hour of need.

Napoleon, too much overwhelmed with business to stand on etiquette, took him at his word ; and the immediate transfer of De Men-

neval to the cabinet of the Consulate was the consequence.

It proved to be indeed an hour of need; for the accumulation of papers was so great, as to daunt even the energetic and ambitious private secretary; who found himself, moreover, extremely puzzled to follow the rapid dictation of the First Consul, who brooked no repetitions; and in this strait, fearful of omitting any portion of his task, De Menneval, after having for a considerable time struggled against the difficulty, ventured one day to ask his impetuous master whether he might be permitted to associate with himself a person capable of assisting him in his labours?

The First Consul paused in the centre of the floor, across which he had been rapidly striding to and fro; and as the words met his ear, he thundered out in a voice beneath which De Menneval quailed,—“ Comment ! vous voulez

ici un troisième, vous ? nous sommes déjà trop de deux !”

Here is another anecdote, which cannot fail to amuse you.

At a subsequent period, when the First Consul had become Emperor of the French, and when he had learned to appreciate the talent, fidelity, and exertion of his private secretary, it chanced, as was indeed by no means uncommon to the impetuous Conqueror, that business was infinitely more rife than time ; and that M. de Menneval had been at the desk during three days and nights, snatching a hasty meal, but quite unable to indulge the feeling of weariness which had grown to positive pain.

The Emperor, to whom it had never occurred that nature could not hold out beyond a certain point, had not reflected on the sufferings of his zealous amanuensis ; and was pacing the apartment on the evening of the fourth day, with his

arms folded behind him, dictating in an unimpassioned and monotonous voice, as was his custom, without once looking towards the Baron, who had long learned never to expect the repetition of any sentence from the lips of his impatient master; when suddenly missing the sound of the rapid pen, which now failed for the first time, Napoleon paused, and turned towards the desk.

There sat M. de Menneval, bending over his papers; the pen had dropped from his hand, and he was fairly asleep. Only a few moments, however, elapsed when the Baron in his turn, amid his uneasy slumber, missed the measured tramp of the Emperor, with that extraordinary power of perception peculiar to the fitful sleep of exhaustion; and opening his eyes with a sudden start, he discovered, seated beside him, Napoleon himself, writing most industriously on the very sheet of paper on which he had been engaged; the Emperor having taken up

the subject where the overpowered secretary had resigned it.

The confusion of the Baron may be imagined. .
“ Pardon, Sire !” he exclaimed with clasped hands, as he started from his seat ; “ do not blame me for want of zeal—I was not master of myself.”—“ Monsieur,” retorted the Emperor, “ why do you go to sleep while I am dictating ?”—“ Sire !” said De Menneval deprecatingly, “ I beseech of your Majesty to forgive my involuntary fault, and to remember that this is the fourth day that I have spent at the desk, without one hour of rest—I was exhausted, and my weariness overpowered me.”—“ M. le Baron !” said Napoleon earnestly, as he looked up for an instant from his occupation ; “ why did you not remind me of this ? Allez vous coucher, monsieur ; allez vous coucher.”

De Menneval needed no second bidding ; he at once withdrew, and the Emperor worked during a great portion of the night ; and when

they resumed their united labours on the morrow, he made not the slightest allusion to the circumstance.

Thank me for these characteristic anecdotes, which are both authentic and unpublished.

LETTER X.

Letters from Home—General Garavaque—Cowardice—
Self-Delusion—Stanzas — The Mad-house — Gratuitous Suffering.

I HAVE just received a most welcome packet from England. My father is at Paris, on his way to join me, and in another week I may hope to see him here. He has decided to accompany me to Constantinople, and you will require no assurance of my joy. How much shall we have to hear and to tell! What eventful months to live through in an hour or two of breathless conversation!

And your own long, delightful letter, with what pleasure did I not greet it! I feel as rich as the Eastern Princess, for whom a gallant

Sultan distilled a thousand acres of roses into one small *flacon* of attar !

Thanks to the politeness of General Garavaque, the Commandant of the Department, the state-dungeons are to be opened to me ; but I shall now await my father's arrival before I visit them. A few more weary days, and I shall be as happy as a bird !

With what a different feeling do I contemplate the wide stretch of ocean spread out beneath my window, now that my voyage is decided on. Like the servant of Elijah, I often look towards it ; and if, as he did, I see arising " a little cloud, like a man's hand," I begin, coward that I am ! to dream of storms and tempests ; and I have actually locked up Falconer's *Shipwreck*, from a feeling which is, I fear, half superstitious.

Again I say, that — is deceiving himself. Like too many others, when he cannot mentally array his actions in the white robes of innocence,

he flings around them the ermine mantle of policy ; and hugs himself to peace with the hollow sophistries of the worldly-wise. I shall not envy him his feeling when he shakes off the delusion, which, with his fine mind, he must assuredly do ere long.

Were I not too conscious of the value of all the rest of your letter, I could fairly quarrel with you for the question with which it concludes—*when* do I think of you? Can you really deem the inquiry necessary?

When do I think of thee?—When summer roses

Blush into beauty at the dawn of light ;

When do I think of thee?—When sunset closes

Above a world where all was fair and bright ;

Oft do I think of thee when tempests darken

In solemn grandeur o'er the heaving sea ;

And as I to the sweeping storm-gusts hearken,

I breathe a silent prayer, and think of thee !

Fondly I think of thee !—While idly roving

In distant lands, and under stranger skies,

My heart will never, never cease from loving

All that it learnt in banished hours to prize.

Its thoughts are thine when mountain-winds surround me,

And answer to the wave's mysterious call ;
And when the stillness is so deep around me,
That I can hear the withered rose-leaves fall.

Fondly I think of thee, when flatterers near me
Whisper soft tales I seek not to believe ;
And when in solitude sweet memories cheer me,
Which (unlike Hope !) are powerless to deceive.
Fondly I think of thee when strangers greet me
With the cold smile which speaks not to the heart ;
When, unlike thee, without a thrill they meet me,
And, unlike thee, without a pang they part.

Fondly I think of thee !—Each passing hour
Is full of thy remembrance ; all I see
Of bright and beautiful—a bird, a flower,
Ever is rife with memories of thee.
Not even in sleep by thy sweet smile forsaken,
Still o'er my heart thy gentle image beams ;
And ah ! how often is it mine to waken
Vainly to mourn those fair and fleeting dreams !

Doubt not my truth.—Would he, who to the splendour
Of the bright sun has raised his gladdened eye,

That blessed privilege unmoved surrender,
Content in gloom to live, in gloom to die ?
Would he not sicken for the light departed ?
Would he not languish for the glory gone ?
Thus is it with the absent and true-hearted—
Thus do I answer *thee*, beloved one !

Where think you I have been since I last wrote ? To a Lunatic Asylum on the outskirts of the city, which is one of the “ lions ” of the neighbourhood.

The house is spacious and handsome, and overlooks the sea, which almost washes the boundary-wall of its grounds. Every thing that could be done to increase the cheerfulness of its appearance, has been accomplished with a skilful and an unsparing hand ; raised terraces, trellised walks, beds of bright-coloured flowers, bosquets of roses, avenues of statues, representing none but joyous images—*jets d'eau*, throwing up their spiral threads of silver to the laughing sky ; and the most perfect order, cleanliness, and comfort, combine to render this

receptacle of the afflicted, one of the most attractive-looking places that I have seen in the country.

Of the wretched patients I can say nothing but what is painful, though they all appear perfectly contented : but there is a deeper melancholy in the mirth of a madman than in his grief—I would rather see him weep, than hear his shrill, ringing, soulless laughter. And then the strange, wild, concentrated light in the eye of the insane—I cannot express to you the effect it always has upon me—it is scorching : and their precise, punctilious politeness, how it withers me !

Why is human nature ever prone to seek such encounters as these ? Surely the feelings are sufficiently wrung by constant contact with the world, and the circumstances engendered by that contact, to satisfy even the most morbid imagination ; and yet, half in idleness, and half from a nameless and indefinable impulse, even the

most gay-hearted among us volunteer at times, as I did on this occasion, a weight of gratuitous suffering, which, while unprofitable to all around them, is doubly painful to themselves.

Solve the problem for me.

LETTER XI.

A welcome Arrival—Fort St. John—The Dungeons—
The Flèche-des-Accoules — Palace of Justice—Fes-
tival of the Royal College—Oratory—Distribution of
Prizes—Conventual Recollections.

YES—it is no dream ! After the time of terror which I have passed, my father is once more beside me ; and I feel as though I had no longer a fear, nor a care. His first day here was one of rest, if rest be indeed compatible with constant talking or listening, and late hours : the next was a busy one, for as we were anxious not to suffer an eligible opportunity of pursuing our voyage to escape us, we visited the Constantinople-bound vessels in the port, but are as yet undecided in which we shall take our passage ; as they all sail within a few days of each other.

Being in the immediate neighbourhood of Fort St. John, we took the opportunity of making our tour of its interior. It is extremely extensive; and its modern, or rather, I should say, comparatively modern, round tower, is of the most elegant and graceful design; but being the powder-magazine, it is of course inaccessible to visitors.

The view from the exterior gallery, which runs along the side of the wall enclosing the fort on the seaward side, is beautiful; and as the 'mistral' heaved up the blue bosom of the waters, I was glad to fold my shawl more closely about me; though the heat of the sun, reflected from the white stone with which it is built, was excessive. "Here, at least," I said to the soldier who acted as our guide, "you must have escaped the cholera; lifted as you are to so great a height above the city, and breathing an air fresh from the sea."

But no—this unaccountable malady, which seems to defy alike human study and human ingenuity, to assign to it either cause, or limit, or cure, had been here also; and fourteen men had fallen victims to its virulence, besides women and children, within the walls of the fort.

The square tower, the great object of my curiosity, is situated at the opposite extremity of the fortress from its taller, more graceful, but less interesting neighbour. The dungeons, three in number, are situated above each other, and contain barely space sufficient to accommodate two prisoners; the subterranean runs under the whole tower, and is the only prison of the four which does not contain the luxury of a chimney. The principal dungeon is now converted into a powder-store; and the others appear to be equally ‘on the shelf,’ as places of imprisonment at present; being depôts of lumber of different descriptions, assuredly not

requiring the safeguard of the massive, iron-studded, and thrice-bolted doors which enclose them.

I inquired anxiously for the cell of Philippe Egalité, when I was gravely assured that "*le père du roi*" had never been a prisoner in Fort St. John. In vain I combated this assertion; our cicerone was resolute in denying the fact, and assured me that I confounded the fortress in which I then stood, with the Château d'If. I, in my turn, asserted and explained; but he was not to be turned from his purpose; and I left the fort without an actual knowledge of the identity of the dungeon.

On the summit of the tower an extensive platform afforded a healthful and interesting walk for the captives, from whence they could look down upon the crowded port, and the busy city; or watch the working of the wild waves against the rocky islands of If and Ratonneau; sighing perhaps for the same freedom of action,

but inhaling nevertheless, strength, and almost hope, from the very aspect of nature.

Our visit to the Château d'If must depend on the state of the weather ; as, although it is possible to reach it in an hour and a half with a fair wind, it is by no means safe to attempt the passage during the 'mistral;' or agreeable to contemplate the possibility of being detained on the rock for several days, which is not unfrequently the case.

On leaving the fortress, we ascended the steep Montée-des-Accoules ; and passing the Observatory, of which it will suffice to tell you that their valuable English telescope has been broken for twenty years, and is still unrepaired ; we arrived before the gigantic Flèche-des-Accoules ; the sole remain of a gothic church, which, together with another in its immediate vicinity, was destroyed during the Revolution. It was dedicated to Nôtre Dame de las Accoas, and is said to have been of very chaste design

and architecture: be that as it may, the tower or steeple which remains is purely Roman in its style, and most gigantic in size.

Facing this belfry stands the sombre, time-soiled, Palace of Justice; a very grim-looking pile, with a ragged flag flaunting its tattered honours above the portal; and only less repelling in its aspect than the wretched, but fortunately almost tenantless prisons which form part of the edifice.

It was a relief to escape from the sounds and scents of the old town, after having stopped awhile to admire the *façade* of several elaborately ornamented houses of the good old gothic; and to make a pilgrimage through the more modern city, to the Rue de Rome, in which stands a modest fountain, dedicated to the glorious genius who

“Made the marble tremble 'neath his hand,”
—to the immortal Puget. A bust of the artist surmounts the plain column, at whose base the

water gushes out; and which stands immediately in front of the house that he built and inhabited. It forms an angle with the Rue de la Palud; and is small and unpretending.

We yesterday attended the distribution of prizes to the pupils of the Royal College, which, owing to the cholera, had been postponed six weeks beyond the usual period; and as the weather would not admit of the ceremony taking place, as it generally does, in the court of the college, the museum, once the chapel of the monastery, was tastefully fitted up for the occasion with draperies of crimson and blue, falling over the white screens which protected such of the pictures as were hung sufficiently low to incur the risk of injury from the crowd; and thus formed the beloved *tricolour*.

The tribune, richly draped with crimson silk, and decorated with a bust of the king, between two tri-coloured flags, was occupied by the

stage, and the seats of the professors, the table on which the prizes were displayed, and the well-cushioned *fauteuil* of the mayor.

Before the ceremony commenced, I amused myself no little with the company ; and it was droll enough to see the mild, pensive, closely draped head of a Madonna rising above the screen, and over-topping the pink-satin hat and floating feathers of a *petite-maitresse*—or the stern brow and uncovered throat of a Roman senator appearing over the shoulder of a tightly-stocked and mustachioed cavalier.

We obtained our tickets of admission from M. Jauffret, who, with that polite attention which he shows to all foreigners, and more particularly to such as are literary ; although unable from indisposition to attend himself, accompanied us into the Musée to secure eligible seats ; which he accomplished with some difficulty, owing to the great number of visitors.

The students had not long taken their places,

on benches placed amphitheatrically on each side of the stage, ere a military band stationed in the entrance-hall struck up the Marseillaise Hymn; and the professors of the college entered, headed by the mayor, and seated themselves in the tribune.

The business of the day commenced with a very lengthy oration, delivered by the head professor of the classics; insisting on the necessity of an earnest study of the old writers, and containing the usual flourish of scholastic eloquence. Much was said of the French Demosthenes, and the French Cicero; and many alliterative scintillations drew forth approving smiles from the attentive auditory.

The political digression which followed did not meet with such general approval; for the city of Marseilles is famous for its numerous adherents to the exiled family. The speech at length terminated with an address to the collegians; and after another piece of martial music,

the mayor read rapidly, and almost beneath his breath, something or other which could not be heard half a dozen yards off; "the honourable gentleman was inaudible in the galleries."

The overture to *Fra Diavolo* followed; and then the professor of history approached the table, and declared the prizes; which were dealt out with a very liberal hand.

They consisted entirely of books, but wreaths of laurel were in about twenty minutes as plentiful as round hats.

The most interesting portion of the spectacle was to see the youths, whose parents were present, led through the crowd to receive their well-earned laurels at the hands of a father or a mother. One young man carried off about thirty prizes; and I could not help regretting that he had no relative in the hall to share his triumph. A fine noble-looking Greek lad was also conspicuous in the collegiate arena; and altogether the ceremony interested me ex-

tremely; the more, perhaps, because it recalled my own school-days, and the conventual hall in which the same exhibition took place annually.

What a host of memories rushed back upon me! What reminiscences of mirth and of mischief—of study and of struggle! Never shall I forget those years; and on their part, the good Ursulines of St. Omer yet talk of my exploits, both of good and evil—of the difficulties that I overcame in the classes, and the dilemmas by which they were succeeded in the playground.

Peace be with them! I shall always love the veil and the rosary for their sakes; for in my own case I may truly say, that they both bore and forbore.

LETTER XII.

Port of Marseilles—The Quai—Mixed Population —
Grisettes — Marseillaise Poets —The Fish-Market—
Church of St. Lawrence—The Blind Man and his
Daughter — The Flower-Market — The Allées de
Meilhan.

Belle de Mai.

Few prettier scenes present themselves to the traveller than the port of Marseilles. It is a glowing panorama in action, where noble blocks of buildings, forests of tall masts, a sparkling sea, and a clear sky, are ever to be seen; enlivened by groupes in the costume of almost every nation under Heaven, walking, standing, and gesticulating, on the broad pavement which separates the gay-looking and attractive shops, from the glittering and land-locked harbour.

Descending the noble street, called La Canabière, the forum of the city, with its princely

hotel, and its pretty glimpse of the fruit-market, you arrive at once upon the Quai; the resort of merchants, money-changers, mariners of many lands, and dark-eyed grisettes—the prettiest women by far, that are to be met with in this. Here the Algerine, with his small skull-cap, tight-vest, and close-fitting leggings of blue serge, elbows aside the tar of England, with his little straw-hat and well-ribboned shoes: or the Turk with his girdle of shawl, long pipe, and shaven head, covered with the unseemly cap of dingy red worsted, lounges beside the Persian with his ample turban of white muslin, his crimson slippers, and jewelled hand. The Greek sailor, keen-eyed and active, with his dark moustache and voluble utterance, thrusts from him the Barbary Jew with his flowing beard and bent head; the Spaniard, the Italian, the Genoese, and the Austrian, are met in brief communion with the Russian from the frozen north, and the bold mariner from the shores of the Black Sea; while

among these heterogeneous strangers, trip along, with well-poised head and graceful carriage,—amused, but not forgetful of their own attractions, and fully conscious of the admiration which they elicit, many a young beauty of that peculiar class which is to be met with only in France; and in no part of the kingdom can be seen to greater advantage than in Marseilles; where their charms have been so worthily sung by four poets, born under their own clear sky, whose names have become more or less celebrated :—Barthélemy and Mery, known in every saloon in Paris,—Dorange, who was born in song, and died at twenty-five, with all the graceful bays green upon his brow,—and, perhaps, dearer than all to the fair grisettes, because he is more essentially one of their own rank in society, Daumier, the heaven-gifted bard, who, although only a simple glazier, has displayed poetical talents of a high and engaging order.

The port is shut in at one extremity by the rock of Nôtre-Dame-de-la-Garde, and at the other by the dungeon-fortress of St. John, with its elegant round-towers and sea-washed ramparts ; while the mass of shipping in the basin forms a noble centre to the picture, as the colours of many nations stream from the masts-heads of the closely-moored vessels.

The organ of the savoyard, and the wild cry of the seaman, greet you as you pursue your way to the right ; and passing in front of the stately Hôtel de Ville, near which is anchored the gaily-painted and clean-looking police-barge, at length reach the little fish-market, near the Health-Office. Here the Provençal patois is to be heard in all its originality and force. A score of coarse and brawny women, bronzed by a southern sun, and urged on by a love of gain which calls forth all their energies, brawl and threaten each other,—cajole and jeer their customers,—and amid their jargon, emit at times

flashes of native humour, which are almost Irish in their brilliancy.

These are the Amazons of the Quartier St. Jean,—the denizens of the *vieille ville*—the heroines of the Quai—who are as hardy sailors as their husbands and sons; and devout and punctual attendants at the neighbouring church of St. Lawrence; the only sacred edifice in France where the sermon is preached in good racy Provençal.

It is really a pretty spectacle to look into its gloomy aisle during the celebration of the mass, and to see the floor covered with thinly-clad and strong-limbed fishermen, and their ruddy and healthy families. A more attentive and devout congregation never listened to the homily of a priest; and the mobile features of these excitable and enthusiastic children of the south, reflect so visibly the subject of their energetic and zealous pastor, that although I could not, on one occasion when I

visited the church, understand above half of his oration, I was enabled to comprehend the tendency and nature of the whole discourse, by watching the countenance of a fine girl who knelt near me, with her rosary in her hand, and her large bright eyes rivetted on the preacher.

Her blind father was close beside her, and near him lay a crutch-stick which told a tale of further affliction ; but the hand of affection had smoothed the pillow of adversity, for his coarse linen was as white as snow, and his garments were neatly and carefully repaired. He too, listened with such intensity, that the play of his features was a perfect study ; and his sightless eyes were strained in the direction of the pulpit, as though they were bright with an inward light at which the world could only guess ; and few, very few, be able to comprehend.

I learnt their history. He had been struck with lightning at midnight, when fishing in his little bark, accompanied only by his son ; who, ap-

palled as he was by so frightful an occurrence, yet contrived to arrive safely within the shelter of the port ; and, amid the condolences of his acquaintance, to deliver up his stricken parent to the care of his motherless sister.

That sister, from the hour of their affliction, had devoted herself to her wretched father. She shed a torrent of tears when she found that the light of heaven was lost to the smitten one for ever, but she shed them for him, not for herself ; and when they told her that he could never again depend on his own strength, for that his limbs were paralysed, she only smiled ; for this was a minor misery, while she lived to support him.

Her brother, meanwhile, pursued the adventurous and precarious calling of his father ; and often have I seen him drawing his nets at the Château-Vert ; or preparing for the more curious capture of the tunny-fish at the Madragues, with as light a heart as though he had not a

blind parent, and a helpless and lovely sister dependent on him for support.

Truly there must be something in this bright sky, which either teaches or inspires philosophy!

But to return to the Quai. Many a pile of fire-wood, heaped neatly together, serves as a lounge for the elderly mariners, who, pipe in hand, and clustered together in groupes, tell long tales of shipwreck and adventure, amid regrets for the dangers which they are no longer strong enough to dare; and the pavement is at intervals covered with fishing-nets spread in the sun to dry, while their owners sit comfortably under the shelter of the houses, repairing the ravages of the last day's venture. Crowds of children, as fresh and as fair as the morning, meet you at every turn; laughter and song blend with the strange tongues of other lands; and, altogether, I know not a more characteristic and amusing scene than that presented by

the Quai of Marseilles during a sunshiny day in summer.

The flower-market in the Cours Julien is very attractive. A line of pretty women, seated upon wooden platforms, beneath huge white umbrellas, and surrounded by their lovely and perfumed merchandise; some forming bouquets for the bosom of a bride; others weaving garlands of *immortelles* for the grave of a beloved one; and others again blending the scented blossoms into pretty and well-fancied clusters, to tempt the fancy of some *preux chevalier* on his way to the lady of his love; form a *coup d'œil* almost Arcadian; and you have only to move twenty paces onward, across the Canabière, to reach the fruit-market; and to lose yourself among pyramids of golden melons, of amber-coloured grapes, of glowing pomegranates, and luscious oranges.

Once a-year there is a flower-fête at Marseilles, which is held in the Allées de Meilhan: a

lovely promenade, having a centre, and two lateral walks, sheltered by lines of noble trees. Here, at the festival of flowers, assemble all the youth and beauty of the city: while the fair merchants, attired in their gayest garments, form an avenue along the centre walk; and stand amid a temporary wilderness of sweets, themselves as fresh and glowing as the blossoms over which they preside.

How many secrets are betrayed at the Fête des Fleurs! How many love-tales are then told for which words never could have sufficed! The fair one of the suburb looks to this lovely anniversary as the harvest of her hopes; and, while tending her flowers during the inclement season, finds a solace for her toil in the anticipation of its reward; while the beauty of the city, uncertain whether the heart she covets is indeed her own, endures the suspense uncomplainingly through long and weary months, assured that at the Fête des Fleurs her doubts will be resolved.

Nor are the Allées de Meilhan abandoned with the termination of the festival. During the fine evenings of summer they are the chosen lounge of the *élite* of the city. A double row of chairs, which are sacred to the aristocrats of the place, and may be hired for a sous or two each, fence in the centre avenue, where every luxury of costume, and excess of fashion may be found; while the lateral walks are crowded by smart grisettes with their dark eyes, slender ankles, and short petticoats; whose merry laughter, and real gaiety of heart, leave them nothing to envy, though many a feather dances in the breeze, and many a jewel flashes in the moon-light, among the more patrician beauties of the grand avenue.

So much for the fish, the fruit, and the flower-markets. My next letter must treat of graver things.

LETTER XIII.

The Health-Office—The Cholera of Horace Vernet—
The Plague of David—The *Basso-relievo*—The Plague
of the Baron Gérard—The Yellow-Fever of Vinchon
—The Plague of Guérin.

SINCE I last wrote, I have spent two delightful hours at the Health-Office, over the magnificent paintings which decorate its committee-room.

The apartment is of very moderate dimensions ; but what treasures does it not contain ! I believe I ought, in compliment to the popularity of David, to begin by the mention of his *chef-d'œuvre* ; but I am still haunted by the “ Cholera ” of Horace Vernet ; a recent acquisition, and one which, even without its melancholy associations, must inevitably have blinded me, for the first half-hour, to every other painting in the room.

This picture was purchased by the city for the comparatively trifling sum of 80,000 francs; and is the master-piece of the artist,—the figures do every thing but breathe. It represents the sick-bay of the *Melpomene* ship of war, whose crew have been attacked by the malady: one recent victim still lies in the back-ground, with the expression of the death-agony yet unfaded from his ghastly features: immediately in front of him an athletic sailor is employed in raising from “between decks” a new victim; while in the centre of the picture are grouped the principal actors in the tragic scene.

Leaning against a gun, on which rests an open register, is the quarter-master of the ship; and his head is decidedly the most life-like that I ever saw on canvas. It is turned towards the ascending patient with an expression of sorrowing curiosity; there is no horror, no unmanly dread on the high brow, and in the speaking eye; fear has no share in his emotion; he seeks

only to ascertain the individuality of the new victim—every other question were needless.

Near him stands a cabin-boy, whom the disease has just attacked : the wrist of the lad is in the hand of the surgeon, who is gazing earnestly and pityingly on the young, fair victim, (for the boy, even amid his anguish, is of almost godlike beauty,) as he counts the fevered pulse ; while a sailor waits beside him, ready to obey his orders.

What a tale of misery and despair is here told by the pencil—and *so* told ! The cholera-smitten are in the midst of the wide seas—they cannot fly from their fate—you see at once that each hour claims its victim : you have before you the strong man dead, and the stripling dying ; with a hot sun above their heads, and hopelessness in their hearts !

By some strange perversity, the artist, who selected his own situation for the painting, has hung it in a false light ; but the authorities are

about to remove it to another part of the room, where it will be seen to much greater advantage.

Opposite to this painfully-beautiful picture hangs the "Plague" of David; and you will readily believe that it is but an exchange of horrors; though I confess that to me (heretic as I am!) much of the effect of this justly-celebrated painting is lost, from the blending of the divine with the human, so common in the productions of Catholic artists. The eye has scarcely rested on the appalling group of the plague-smitten—you have not had time to thrill at the power of the pencil, which has thus placed before you with such startling fidelity the three stages of the pestilence,—the sickening lethargy of the growing poison—the delirious madness of the ripened plague—and the despairing helplessness of the expiring principle of life,—ere you are irresistibly impelled to the contemplation of the heavenly group which occupies the centre of the canvass.

Saint Roch is on his knees before the Virgin, praying for a cessation of the plague ; his figure is the perfection of grace, and his earnest and inspired expression is eminently beautiful ; while the Madonna and Child are each exquisite. The hands of the Infant Christ are raised in supplication, and rest almost on the cheek of his divine mother, and the expression of his head is lovely.

It is not until you have looked long and lingeringly on this master-group, that you begin to perceive that the back-ground of the picture is crowded with figures,—the dead and the dying ; and after having lost yourself for a time in the contemplation of grace and beauty, you are thus recalled to the subject of the picture. But the human sympathies which have been checked do not well forth again,—the feeling with which you gaze is a divided one ; and you think of the *artist*, while you should be engrossed only by the effects of his art.

One of the great merits of this picture is its entire freedom from the crudity of style with which David has often been reproached ; and the objection that I have ventured in all humility to make, is probably a merely individual one. Those very startling contrasts unhinge me ; but I am, nevertheless, most probably in error, for it is certain that the picture was originally painted as the altar-piece of the chapel of the Lazaretto, but was, when completed, considered so beautiful, that the authorities purchased it, in order to retain it in their city.

On a line with this painting, above the mantel, and veiled by a curtain of green silk, is the " Plague" of the immortal Puget, an unfinished *basso relievo* in white marble ; of which it may be sufficient to tell you, that after his decease, the city, anxious for the completion of so exquisite a work, invited a celebrated Italian artist to Marseilles to apply the last touches. The artist came ; but when he was placed before it,

he stood for awhile in silence and surprise ; and then suddenly turning away, he gathered his tools together, and bade his employers refrain from the sacrilege of adding aught to a masterpiece, which he felt that individually *he dared not touch*.

Passing this magnificent effort of genius, for which, *soit dit en passant*, some English nobleman offered 110,000 francs, (although to the honour of the city it was refused) ; you stand before the “ Plague ” of the Baron Gérard.

The fore-ground of the picture is perfection : the woman, whose stripling-son has just writhed under the plague-spasm, is of the most exquisite beauty. The blended terror and tenderness which are apparent in every line of her fine face,—the dilation of her large dark eye—the curve of her trembling lip, as she buries his face upon her shoulder, and strains him to her breast, as though she dreaded that he should be torn from her—the expression of maternal self-abandon-

ment with which she clasps infection, are perfectly thrilling; while a sweet infant is clinging to her knee, and gazing up into her face unheeded. She has no thought, no feeling, save for her "first-born,"—her beautiful—the son of her youth! A companion is dying beside her, but she offers no aid—she feels no sympathy: her heart, her energies, her very soul is wrapped up in her boy!

A strong man is expiring near at hand, but she moves not beyond his groans—she is unconscious of them—her ear admits no sound save the deep breathing of the sickness which is weighing down her child——

I could not waste a moment on the elaborate grouping in the back-ground, where M. de Bel-sunce, in crimson and gold, is distributing bread to a kneeling crowd. My heart was with the mother whose agony was too deep for hunger—whose famine was of the soul.

Opposite to the windows hangs the great

picture of the "Yellow-Fever," by Vinchon. Here is another tale of suffering, of which the principal figure is a portrait. Upon a bed lies a dying man, over whom leans a Sister of Charity; but it is not the patient whom she supports—it is not the death of the exhausted victim which she contemplates with such wild terror. Kneeling in the fore-ground, and still grasping a ribbon with which he has just bound up the arm of the sufferer, a young man is sinking to the earth,—the physician has imbibed the infection; he who came to save, droops beneath the miasma of the sick-chamber, and the damps of death are already upon his brow. You feel that he would be prostrate on the earth, did not that woman-hand uphold him; and you are tempted to rush forward to arrest the coward-steps of the attendant, who, terrified at the catastrophe which he has just witnessed, is hurrying from the room.

It is a sad and a true tale! During the viru-

lence of the disease at Barcelona, four young French physicians and four Sisters of Charity vowed themselves to the service of the victims. It is the death of one of the former, Dr. Mazet, which this noble picture has bequeathed to posterity ; and in which genius has insured an immortality of honour to self-sacrificing virtue.

The "Plague" of Guérin, a Marseillaise artist, is, to me at least, at once the most painful, and the least pleasing of the collection. Death is always frightful ; yet there is a morbid feeling inherent in our nature which makes us, at particular moments, linger over its attributes ; but who would wish the veil torn aside when the next change has come over humanity ?—when the work of decay is begun ? Even the beauty of the unburied victim, so prominent in the foreground of this picture, could not overcome the sickening disgust with which I looked upon it ; nor could I reconcile myself one whit more, though from a very different feeling, to the

corpulent gentleman in an old-fashioned uniform of bright scarlet, who is lifting from the earth the body of a young and graceful woman, whose nerveless hands have just unclasped themselves from the corpse of her infant ; even although I was informed that it was a portrait of the Chevalier Rozé, whose humane exertions had tended so greatly to the diminution of the plague, by his promptitude in burying the dead.

Surely his country might have perpetuated his memory in a less incongruous manner. As it is, the picture might be very appropriately called a Portrait of the Chevalier Rozé and his Horse ; for they occupy about two-thirds of the canvass.

I have given you a very unartist-like account of these magnificent pictures, but I could not do otherwise ; for although an enthusiastic admirer of the art, I can pretend to nothing further. I love paintings as children love flowers,—for their general beauty, and the feelings

which they awaken ; and even as they would cast away an inferior blossom to cherish one more attractive ; so I, in my turn, although not altogether unable to appreciate the value, or to detect the defects of a picture *en masse*, am nevertheless quite incompetent to talk learnedly on the subject.

The child may wreath its garland without being a botanist ; and, on the same principle, the spectator may *feel* the excellencies of a noble painting without being a connoisseur. We do not always enjoy those things the most, which we can the most perfectly explain.

LETTER XIV.

The Château Borély—The Count de Panisse—A Landscape—The Picture Gallery—Old Masters—The Château des Eygalades—Residence of Josephine—Château de Fontainieu—Magnificent View—Fondness of the Marseillaise for their Bastides.

Belle de Mai.

THE Château Borély is, and deserves to be, the pride and boast of Marseilles.

Situated at an easy drive from the city, backed by lofty hills, sheltered by majestic and luxuriant trees, and seated nearly on the border, and almost on the level of the sea, boasting a magnificent terrace and a fine court, rises the princely château of the Sieur Borély, a wealthy merchant, whose taste, liberality, and elegance of mind were truly regal; and who has left be-

hind him, in the well-proportioned and classical edifice which bears his name ; but above all, in the precious gallery of pictures that it contains, a monument more lasting than could have been graven into the eternal marble.

The Château Borély is now the property of the Count de Panisse ; a man of fine taste and refined mind, worthy to be the owner of the treasures, of which he does the honours with as much judgment as courtesy.

Below the terrace, which commands a noble sea-view, is a fine basin, where a pair of swans revel at once in the clear sunshine and the pellucid water ; this is fringed with luxuriant trees, and lower still flows the river. On one side spreads the sea, blue and bright, and dotted over with a hundred fairy barks ; on the other, vineyards, and gardens, and meadows stretch far away, and form a lovely scene of landscape beauty.

The glittering Huveaume, rushing towards

the sea with the hurry, and almost with the noise of a large river, attracts alike the eye and the ear ; while the boats, filled with holiday-folk in their gay-coloured dresses, glide along under the cool shadows of the overhanging trees which fringe its banks : here and there a glimpse of the port may be caught ; and the wooded hills of Mazargues add to the cool beauty of the prospect.

Admirable in its situation, correct and pleasing in its architecture, and judicious in its arrangement, the Château Borély still owes its great charm to the valuable collection of paintings which adorns its walls, and which is said to be the finest in France.

Four exquisite pictures by Murillo, one of them considered his *chef d'œuvre* ; two noble Rembrandts ; a marine landscape by Ruisdaël, of the most beautiful finish and detail ; several fine pieces by Puget, one of them a Virgin, and incomparably the best of his works ; two lovely

portraits by Mignard, of Anne of Austria and the Duchesse de la Vallière; landscapes by Woovermans, Jean Miel, Van Bloum, Orisonti, Mieris, Sinebach, Berghem, Both and Bandoïn, Bruandel and Demarne, affording admirable specimens of these celebrated masters; divide the attention with a St. Jerome by Calabrèse, a picture remarkable both for composition and colouring; an extraordinary marine view by Bakuishéen, saved from the fire of Moscow, and highly esteemed; and thirty-seven paintings on panel by Paul Parocel, a master whose works are as rare as they are beautiful. This set of pictures is remarkable both for colouring and effect. They represent the history of Tobit, and once belonged to the gallery at St. Germain-en-laye. A large sum has been frequently offered for this unique suite of paintings, but always refused.

The gem of the collection is, however, an exquisite Madonna, attributed to Andrea del

Sarto, but by many connoisseurs declared to be the work of Rafaëlo,—any thing more perfectly lovely, more beautifully holy, it were impossible to imagine, than the expression of this divine head ! I could have looked on it for hours !

I might name a score of other pictures, all by eminent hands, and well worthy of mention ; but even as it is, my letter bears no inconsiderable resemblance to a catalogue, and I most reluctantly forbear.

M. de Panisse is justly and *judiciously* proud of his splendid gallery, of which he does the honours with taste and urbanity ; and few are the strangers who are not under an obligation to this gentleman for his ready politeness, and very efficient ciceroneship.

Another château worthy of mention in the neighbourhood is that of the Eygalades, celebrated as having been for some time the residence of Josephine previously to her marriage with Napoleon ; and prettily situated on the

banks of a charming stream bordered with trees, which takes its source a short distance above the château, where it forms a fine natural cascade.

Beyond this river, sheltered by a neighbouring height, and overtopped by a pine-wood, stands the Château de Fontainieu; which deserves a visit, were it only that from its commodious terrace the finest view imaginable may be secured. Every accessory necessary to the perfection of landscape-scenery is here profusely spread around you; and superadded are the blue, bright, ever-changing sea, with its white sails and its sparkling ripple; the town seated horse-shoe-wise round the port, and stretching far away towards the mountain-plain, until its streets dwindle into scattered bastides:—the neighbouring islands of Pomègue, Ratoneau, and If; and far away in the distance, amid the sunshiny waves, the little rock and light-house of Planier, like a speck on the horizon.

With these exceptions, Marseilles boasts no châteaux or villas at all likely to attract a stranger; and it is wonderful that such should be the case, for there are several spots in the neighbourhood almost as lovely as those which I have just attempted to describe; while the city has boasted, and may still boast, more than one "merchant-prince," whose means would amply suffice for so elegant an indulgence. But handsome as many of their establishments are within the barrier, the wealthy Marseillaise do not appear to covet either cost or comfort in their dwellings without; and "*Je vais à ma bastide*," is said with as much complacency by the owner of one of the little white-washed and green-shuttered edifices to which I have already alluded, conscious as he must be of its many deficiencies, as though it were the Château Borély with its costly gallery, or Fontainieu with its almost matchless prospect.

LETTER XV.

The Hôtel de Ville—Statue of Libertat—The Great Hall—Serre's Plague—M. de Belsunce—The Galley Slaves — Aromatic Vinegar — The Dead Mother — Council-chamber — Pictures — M. de Bellois — The Artist-Housemaid.

THE Hôtel de Ville is admirably situated on the Quai, and had it been built after the plan of Puget, would have been one of the finest provincial edifices in the country; even as it is, it is remarkable for the bas-reliefs and sculptures which ornament its façade: and particularly for the escutcheon of France from the hand of Puget himself, which has, however, been subsequently subjected to a meaner chisel, whose traces are very perceptible in the alterations that it has effected. All the exterior

decorations are indeed more or less mutilated, except the bust of Louis XIV., which was only replaced in 1823.

The building is divided into two distinct parts by a street which runs parellel with the Quai; and these are united by a light and elegant bridge, flung from the windows of the first story; the inferior portion being devoted to public offices for the transaction of business; while that which faces the water is reserved for the accommodation of the city authorities, the Exchange, and the Council-Room.

On the great stone staircase stands, in an oval niche, the statue of Libertat, who preserved the city when it had been treacherously sold to the enemy by one of his compatriots. It is a well-executed figure the size of life; and is armed with the identical weapon with which the hero wrought such worthy service.

Having ascended the spacious stair, we entered the Great Hall to see the two pictures of

the "Plague," painted by Serre, the pupil of Puget. The first represents the Cours; a locality rendered doubly interesting from the fact, that M. de Belsunce, the zealous and self-sacrificing Bishop of that period, performed a solemn High Mass on the spot, during the virulence of the disease; despite the deprecatory terrors of the remainder of the clergy, who suffered the venerable prelate to undergo the fatigue and danger unassisted, save by the boys of the choir.

I have seen two autograph letters of M. de Belsunce, written on that memorable day; the one before the celebration of the mass, and the other on his return home; both compiled in a holy and trusting spirit worthy of his high office, and of the frightful emergency in which he found himself placed.

In the fore-ground of the picture is a portrait of the Bishop, urging by his prayers and commendations the efforts of a score of galley-slaves,

who are employed in dragging away the bodies of the dead into a heap, previously to their ultimate removal by the *tomberaux*, or plague-carts. These, the sole survivors of the desperate band who risked life for the purchase of liberty and pardon, which they were promised in the event of their outliving the scourge, in consideration of their rendering good service to the city, ultimately all fell victims to the pestilence, save four ; who, on being interrogated at the cessation of the malady, on the means by which they had preserved existence ; stated that they had saturated their garments by accident with some liquid drugs, which they had overturned in the shop of a chymist as they were carrying out his body.

Guided by the scent, a clever practitioner, after a few experiments, succeeded in compounding the essence known with us as Aromatic Vinegar ; and hence this pungent preparation acquired in France the *soubriquet* of *Vinaigre des quatre Voleurs*.

The second picture represents the Hôtel de Ville, and that portion of the Quai immediately adjoining, cumbered with victims : among the groupes, not the least affecting is one in which an infant, still clasped in the arms of its dead mother, is endeavouring in vain to draw from her chilled bosom the warm stream of life. It was a fact that a child was thus found, and saved by a humane individual; and this saddening episode in the history of horror has been faithfully and feelingly depicted by the artist, who has also introduced his own portrait in a neighbouring group.

The most attractive picture in the room, however, is that of Féron, painted at Rome in 1832; which represents the passage of Hannibal across the Alps, at the moment when he obtains his first view of Italy. The grouping and expression are masterly, and the colouring gorgeous without glare. The snow-covered mountains, crowded with warriors, form a magnificent contrast to the sunny and smiling,

though distant landscape spread out beneath them ; and it is impossible to look upon the excited and eager countenances of the band, without almost sympathizing in their delight.

From the Great Hall we passed on to the Council-Chamber, which contains a chastely chiselled mantel of white marble, the work of Chardini ; a magnificent full-length portrait of M. de Belsunce, by Langlois ; a vile daub of Louis Philippe, all gold-lace and frippery, by some obscure artist whose name has been charitably forgotten ; a curious old head of "Le bon Roy René," painted by himself ; and a kitcat likeness of M. de Bellois, who from being Bishop of Marseilles, was created a Cardinal under the Empire.

The venerable prelate is represented in his 100th year, which, however, he did not live to complete by three months. He was a great favourite with Napoleon, who on one occasion is stated to have said to him ; "If your Eminence goes on thus,

I have hopes that you will live to complete your century." To which the patriarch replied gaily : " Your Majesty is ungenerous. I have already made up my mind on that point, and should have desired something more at your Imperial hands."

We were next ushered into a small ante-room, in which hang four portraits, esteemed great curiosities from the singular story attached to them. They were painted by the female servant of an artist, and are admirably executed. They represent her parents, her sister, and herself, and are thrillingly life-like ; although, of course, deficient in the high finish and elaborate touches of a more professional and practised hand.

Finding that she neglected her household duties to watch his labours, whenever she could intrude herself into his studio ; her master, to cure her of so useless and unprofitable a habit, one day, half in sport and half in reproof, bade

her take the pencils, and convince herself of her waste of time ; when, instantly seizing the opportunity afforded by the taunt, she surprised him by a performance replete with mind and judgment, which so delighted him, that from that moment he adopted her as a pupil ; and the result was before us.

* * * * *

I now begin to wish that you were here
The blue Mediterranean is laughing in the
light ; the song of the vintagers swells upon
the wind ; the whole face of the landscape is
decked in beauty ;—and I am, as ever,

Yours unalterably and unfeignedly.

LETTER XVI.

The Abbey of St. Victor—The Plague—The Chapel—
The Subterranean—The Crypt—An *Ex Voto*—Shrine
of St. Andrew—Chapel of St. Lawrence—Cell of St.
Lazarus—Fate of Four of the Early Christians.

WE have lately paid a visit to the Abbey-church of St. Victor, once a very extensive and well-peopled monastery, whose community were all of noble birth, and exercised considerable authority in the city.

The incense was yet smoking on the altar of Diana, in what is now the Eglise de la Major, when a few Christians assembled together in a subterranean beneath the spot on which the chapel of St. Victor at present stands; where they performed the solemn services of their faith, wept exulting tears over the ashes of their mar-

tyrs, and concealed from Pagan eyes the mysteries of their new religion.

Subsequently, a monastery was built above the vault ; but as its situation beyond the city walls rendered it defenceless, it was soon destroyed by the Saracens. The spot was, however, too holy in Christian eyes to be readily abandoned ; and from the ruins of the first monastery sprang an abbey, whose mitred abbot boasted almost regal power, and which soon became celebrated for its vast possessions, and gorgeous decorations. Various modifications gradually took place in the community, and the monks were secularized during the last century ; but the Revolution ultimately dispersed them, their property was sold, and the abbey was in great part demolished.

All that now remains of this once-powerful and extensive establishment is an insignificant chapel ; rendered famous, however, by its crypt, and a host of saintly associations.

The monks of St. Victor lost much of their popularity during the plague; when, instead of imitating the heroic self-devotion of M. de Bel-sunce, who, casting away all personal and selfish considerations, penetrated into every infected nook of the city, carrying comfort and hope wherever he appeared, they provisioned the abbey as for a siege; and after closing and securing every door and window, refused to hold any communication with those without; thus ensuring their own safety, as far as human means could tend to its preservation, at the expense of every generous and pious feeling.

All vestiges of the habitable portion of the monastery are now swept away; and spacious manufactories and extensive store-houses have grown up over the space once devoted to the lordly monks of St. Victor.

We entered the chapel during the celebration of the High Mass. The aisles were crowded with people; the altar was glittering with tinsel,

and flashing with light; the officiating priests were gorgeous in their crimson robes and point-lace *soutanes*, and the atmosphere was heavy with incense. A lovely Magdalene hung above the spot on which I stood; and St. Lazarus, crowned with gilt paper, and surrounded by faded flowers, was in my immediate vicinity.

The sacristan, when informed of our arrival, did not delay us a moment; but beckoning to us to follow him through the kneeling crowd, caught up half a dozen wax tapers, and unlocking a door which occupied an arched niche in the chapel, motioned us to enter. As we crossed the threshold, he closed the entrance of the vault, and we suddenly found ourselves in utter darkness.

The murmur of prayer scarcely reached us, although we yet stood within a pace or two of the iron-studded door, which, as well as the solid masonry of the wall, almost precluded sound; and I may as well confess my cowardice, and

acknowledge to you that, until our guide lighted the tapers, and gave one to each of the party, I felt a strange sensation of awe steal over me; for which I was of course indebted to the associations of the place.

The keen cold air which met us as we descended into the vaults; the deep dreary silence, broken only by our own foot-falls, as they awoke a low, lingering reverberation; the clinging darkness that seemed to mock the feeble glimmerings of our pigmy torches, and to fold, as in a mantle, the extremities of the subterranean; all conspired to form so strong a contrast from the glittering scene in the chapel, that it was impossible not to yield in some degree to a feeling of solemnity that prepared us to receive with a proper portion of deference, if not with a perfect faith, the saintly legends which awaited us.

At the foot of the stone-stair by which we descended, we found ourselves in a lofty vault,

deeply arched, and lighted by a grating from above; and as soon as we were able to distinguish objects through the gloom, the guide directed our attention to a screened bridge, built of hewn stone, which traversed the subterranean at the height of about twenty feet from the floor, and was supported by four granite pillars. This bridge terminated at each extremity in a secret door, that, during the period of the persecutions, afforded a passage to those who sought refuge in the vaults, or who desired to attend religious worship, without risk to their personal safety.

These latter were not, however, entrusted with the secret of the crypt that was beneath them; nor had they any cause to suspect that the narrow chapel in which they offered up their orisons in trembling and in tears, was but the beginning of a mystery—the mere portal of a sanctuary still more securely hidden.

Having traversed, or rather made a tour of

the main vault, and remarked the yawning apertures whence the ancient sarcophagi have been torn away, we entered the chapel, which contains two curious objects. The first is a black Madonna, said to be 1700 years old; and famous for delivering the city from drought, if fervently invoked!

The second is an *ex voto* of last year—yes, actually of last year; which was deposited here with great pomp and solemnity. It represents a dying man, surrounded by his physicians and friends; and was vowed to the Virgin of this chapel by the wife of the patient, who having been attacked with paralysis, and condemned by the faculty, was considered as a dead man. In this strait, the wife hurried to St. Victor; and having obtained some oil from the lamp that is suspended from the roof, she carried it home full of faith and triumph, applied it to the affected parts, and instantly restored their powers!

Do we really live in the nineteenth century?

From the chapel we proceeded to the altar dedicated to St. Andrew, who, it is asserted, was for some time concealed in the subterranean; and beside it a small space, railed off to prevent the desecration of less holy contact, was pointed out to us as that on which the saint was wont to take his short and infrequent rest. To the wall immediately above it, is nailed a wooden cross, which we were informed with great seriousness was *not* the actual instrument of torture by which the martyred saint had subsequently suffered, as that precious relic had been stolen at the Revolution; but a comparatively modern one, which had been substituted by a pious Bishop, in remembrance of the real and authentic cross, of which the monks of St. Victor had once been possessed.

Our under-ground pilgrimage next brought us to a chapel, built in the time of St. Augus-

tine; and dedicated to St. Lazarus, St. Blaise, and St. Louis, whose effigies decorate the back of the altar.

Thence we progressed to that of St. Victor and St. Lawrence, whose shrine is of rich Florentine marble; but the greatest curiosity of the subterranean is the cell of St. Lazarus, in which, as we were assured, he was sequestered for a considerable time; and which was held, even until the "glorious three days," so holy, that no good Catholic entered it with his shoes on; but, putting the Saint on a par with the Sultan, left his slippers at the threshold.

This cell, which is entered from a narrow gallery at the foot of a second flight of stone steps, contains a very curious font, hollowed in the rock; a confessional wrought in the same artificial manner; an oven; and an altar-piece, representing Mary Magdalene in the wilderness, hewn in the living stone.

In this cell the entrance to a subterranean passage is shown, which, it is asserted, once traversed the port, and terminated in the vaults of the *Eglise de la Major*; but this is pure tradition, as no vestige of the existence of such a communication can now be traced. Be it as it may, however, the subterranean was well worthy of a visit.

There is a sad tale told of four of the concealed Christians, who, during their retreat in this vault, ventured without a light into its deepest recesses; and engrossed by the subject of their discourse, became bewildered among the windings of the subterranean. It is supposed that the dread of betraying their fellow-refugees prevented their using the only means likely to save them, by inducing them to abstain from any outcry which might be heard by their enemies; for, when their absence became matter of comment and inquiry among

their friends; and that after vainly endeavouring to obtain intelligence of them in the city, the anxious Christians bethought themselves of the possibility of the frightful catastrophe which had really occurred, a party volunteered to explore the recesses of the subterranean; and the miserable men were discovered huddled together in a corner, a mere mass of bones and putridity, defying their comrades to yield them even a grave, until time had rendered their remains less revolting!

But enough of this—my next letter will probably be written from Nismes, as I am anxious to see its boasted antiquities before I leave the country; and two vessels being shortly about to sail for Constantinople, we have no time to lose.

The exact period of their departure is uncertain, as it will of course be greatly dependant on the ‘mistral,’ during whose continuance

(and it is now blowing hard) no vessel can
leave the port.

Meanwhile, farewell—and all peace and love
be with you !

spectators; but as you slowly run your eye along the three ranges of seats, which remain almost perfect; and count the hundred and twenty vomitories that enabled the crowd quietly and safely to possess themselves of their allotted places; the mind gradually progresses from wonder, to a rapt and speechless admiration of the consistent, the vast, and the graceful attributes of this noble Roman remain.

The oval of the arena, which, as I before remarked, is perfect, stretches from east to west, and is four hundred and five feet in length including the walls; the inferior diameter from north to south, similarly measured, encloses three hundred and seventeen feet; and the height of the building, from the foundation to the parapet, is sixty-six feet. I mounted to the summit, whence the arena itself is seen to the greatest advantage, and the city is spread out beneath in all its extent; while the Tour-

Magne, another Roman ruin, crowns a neighbouring height.

There is no positive danger in this survey, although you require steady nerves to undertake it, as, in point of fact, you are protected by projecting masses of stone, which are placed two and two between a couple of columns; and amount in number to one hundred and twenty. These blocks are about two feet in height, and are pierced in the centre with a hole of about twelve inches in circumference. They were made, as the *concierge* informed me, to receive the poles of the tents or awnings that protected the spectators from the vicissitudes of the weather; of which fact there can indeed be no doubt, as similar ones are to be traced along the cornice beneath.

There have been many disputes as to the exact order of architecture of which this amphitheatre is so noble a remain. It has been by some antiquaries assumed to be a blending of

the Tuscan with the Doric; while it is generally admitted to be but an imperfect, or rather, perhaps I should say, irregular specimen of either.

But what cared I, as I stood on the lofty parapet, listening to the learned jargon of the cicerone, for the cavils of science? What cared I, as I wandered in silent awe among the covered galleries, when I had at length succeeded in ridding myself of the guide, to which school the thousand columns might belong, by which I was surrounded? Or of what avail would it have been to me, could the "most potent, grave, and reverend" antiquaries have decided on the exact order of the four glorious gates that open into the arena?

No learned decision—no elaborated disquisition could have added one iota to the solemn and awe-struck delight with which I lingered, hour after hour, about the building; shivering with that strange chill which is ever the atmo-

spheric concomitant of ruin; and with that ringing silence in my ears which must be felt ere it can be understood.

Surely this is the very age of vandalism! What will you say, when I tell you that this noble pile is frequently desecrated by being made the scene of insignificant and pigmy sport? That, where man once contended with man,—where the dying gladiator breathed out his last sigh amid the savage acclamations of admiring thousands, who overlooked the bitterness of his fate in the greatness of his heroism,—where beasts of prey howled forth their rage; and man, in the pride of his strength, shouted back his defiance,—a few scores of people now assembled to laugh at the antics of a harlequin, or to weep over the pitiful sorrows of a melodrame!

A pretty specimen this of Utilitarianism!

I could have forgiven the wrestling-matches, which at particular seasons of the year take

place in the arena; for they are a lingering remain of the athletic sports of old, when men prided themselves on their personal prowess, and infused greatness even into their games; but to erect a stage all trash and tinsel,—to profane the solemn stillness of the place with the vaudevilles of the Porte St. Martin, and the fooleries of Punchinello—alas! alas!

“To what base uses may we come at last!”

Our journey hither was delightful; and at Terascon we saw the Lancers who are about to accompany the Duke of Orleans to Algiers; they are a very fine-looking set of men, and extremely well mounted.

The suspension-bridge flung across the Rhône between this town and Beaucaire, is of very graceful dimensions; and is terminated on the Terascon side of the river by the castle of le Bon Roi René, a solid square pile, having a round tower at each angle.

This château was built in the thirteenth cen-

tury, on the ruins of a temple of Jupiter ; and it was not until two hundred years afterwards that it became the property of the Counts of Provence. But the most remarkable feature of Terascon is its annual procession in honour of Ste. Martha, the patron saint of the town ; who after her arrival on the shores of Camarqua, came to Terascon, only to find its neighbourhood ravaged by a monster called Tarasque, who glutted his demoniacal appetite on human flesh. This cannibal was ultimately fettered by the girdle of the saint, and banished the country ; and since this happy event, a procession takes place every year amid the acclamations of the inhabitants, when a colossal representation of the vanquished monster is led through the streets, attached to a ribbon, by a young girl.

A statue, and divers relics of the saint, are preserved in a subterranean chapel of the parish church.

On the opposite bank of the river rises a steep height which is crowned by the turreted Château de Beaucaire. This cheerful town stretches far along the river, and is celebrated for its fair; which, after those of Leipsic and Frankfort, is the first in Europe.

On our arrival at the Grand Hôtel de Luxembourg, with its hundred sleeping-rooms, and better still, its salt-spoons and sugar-tongs (!) we found ourselves under the same roof with the Vice-roi of Catalonia, the Comte d'Espagne; who having broken his parole, and been retaken on the French frontier, was now on his way to Lille, under the escort of a couple of gend'sarmes; which destination was, for some reason or other, so disagreeable to him, that in order to delay his arrival there, he had pleaded sickness, and had obtained permission to remain a week at Nismes; where he continued a prisoner in his chamber, with a gendarme constantly at the door.

From the window of our sitting-room I caught a glimpse of the majestic amphitheatre; and have already, as I before told you, spent hours within its walls. The twilight is beginning to deepen—the drums of the French regiment in garrison here are awakening the reluctant echoes of the pile; and as they die away amid its recesses, I could almost believe that I hear the far-off rumbling of the Roman war-chariots. But no: the Cæsars, the Pompeys, and the Hannibals exist no longer; and it is but the hollow rattling of a Gallic drum, mellowed into music amid the reliques of mighty ages!

LETTER XVIII.

Modern Nismes — Public Walk — Palais de Justice —
Hospital — Theatre — The Square House — Museum —
Paintings — M. Perrot — Singular Discovery — Tuscan
Columns.

WHY did I come hither, when my stay was necessarily limited to so brief a period? I could linger at Nismes for months without the ennui of a moment; for every hour is replete with enjoyment, where objects of interest meet you at every turn.

The town itself is cleanly, and quiet; and bears about it an air of opulence very unusual in provincial places. But to me the great charm of Nismes exists in the fact, that your memory is flung back upon past ages of glory and greatness, when Rome stretched her giant arm over

half the earth ; and that while you encounter on every side some relic of the mighty past, you tread reverently, for you feel that at each step you may perchance scatter the ashes of a hero !

Nevertheless, it is but fair to confess that modern Nismes has its beauties ; setting aside those glorious remains which are doubtlessly the cause, in no inconsiderable degree, of its present prosperity ; for the town has become so certain a halting-place for lion-hunting foreigners, that every point of interest is railed or walled in, wherever the thing was practicable ; and you might fancy yourself in England, for your purse is constantly in your hand.

The windows of our apartments overlook the public walk, which is a large square planted with trees, and raised artificially a few feet above the level of the street ; well gravelled ; and having in the centre a fine basin of dark marble, whence the sparkling water is flung

high into the air by a *jet d'eau*, that is constantly at work.

About three hundred yards from our hotel, stands the Palais de Justice ; a modern building, to which is attached the debtor's jail : and of which I shall only remark, that if equity be as clumsily administered within, as it is awkwardly represented without, I pity its victims ; for two more laughably ridiculous figures than those which flank its entrance, I never beheld.

The public Hospital is of great extent, but its beauty is destroyed by the fact, that the whole range of the building on the *res-de-chaussées* is occupied by trades-people, and divided into shops ; and it is not until your eye is attracted by the two graceful groupings of statues which ornament the portal, that you remark the beauty of the superior portions of the building, and the richness of its elaborately wrought friezes.

A very handsome theatre terminates the

street ; which widens into a square, whose centre is occupied by the exquisite structure absurdly designated the "Square House!"—The last beautiful remain of the Roman Forum,—whose thirty Corinthian columns are of such surpassing workmanship, as to be considered matchless. The capitals are so delicately chiselled, that they have the effect of net-work ; while the acanthus-leaves are of inimitable grace and beauty, and stand out from the column with amazing boldness. All those which run along the sides of the building, (in form an oblong square,) are only partially detached from the wall,—about half their diameter, if my eye served me,—and are united to the edifice by its architrave and cornice. The frieze is laden with sculpture of great beauty, representing a dense wreath of foliage ; and the cornice is of equal richness.

In front of the building is a portico, open on three sides, and approached by a flight of

those very steep steps so usual in Roman edifices. This portico is supported by ten columns, forming part of the thirty, but each distinct and perfect ; six on the face of the building, and two on each side, a little beyond which it joins the wall of the main edifice.

But alas ! how inadequate is this matter-of-fact, guide-book-sort of description, to convey to you any idea of the “ Square House ” of Nismes ! of its graceful proportions, its architectural elaboration, and its wonderful preservation !

As you stand in the arena of the amphitheatre, you are impressed by its stupendous strength, its skilful formation, and the majesty of its outline ; at the “ Square House ” it is the grace, the costliness, and the look of light, airy, fairy-like beauty which attracts you. The one seems to be mouldering away in haughty silence,—the other to smile at the slowness of its own ruin. After all, I prefer the solemn

gloom of the amphitheatre : there should be a majesty in decay, in order to impress the mind with the solemnity belonging to a past age, and a departed generation. Should you ever visit Nismes, I advise you to see the beauties of the Maison Carrée, ere you give yourself up to the glorious memories engendered by the vast solitude of the amphitheatre.

The "Square House" after having served in turn as a temple for idols, and a shrine for the true God, is now converted into a Museum, for which purpose its dimensions are totally inadequate. In a locality like this, where scarcely a week passes that does not add some treasure to the collection, space at least should not be wanting ; but although the arrangement is only a recent one, fragment is already piled upon fragment, and capital upon monument, in most elaborate disorder ; the centre of the floor being occupied by a fine piece of mosaic pavement, found at a depth of five feet below the founda-

tions of the building ; and supposed to have belonged to some house, demolished to yield place to this more important edifice. The large space railed off for the protection of the pavement, necessarily diminishes very considerably the accommodations of the Museum, which measures only forty-eight feet in length, and thirty-six in breadth ; and which already bids fair to be choked with riches.

The largest, and perhaps one of the best paintings in the Museum, is a representation of Dante's *Inferno*, by Colin. The collection is singular enough in one respect ; for nine out of every dozen of the pictures have some horror for their subject. We found two young artists at work when we entered ; the one copying a "Christ crowned with thorns," and the other the original picture of "Cromwell contemplating the body of his Royal Victim," with the coffin-lid in his hand ; suggested by a passage in one of Sir Walter Scott's novels ; and of which I re-

member to have seen two copies in England ; the one a bad engraving in a periodical ; and the other a magnificent pencil-drawing, very appropriately placed in the library of "Chequers," in Buckinghamshire, the fine seat of the Russell family ; where the Protector passed so much of his time, and where many interesting reliques of him still remain.

The keeper of the Museum, M. Perrot, is a professional antiquary ; and we passed from the "Square House" to his cabinet, which is literally crammed with objects of *vertù*, from a mummy to a medal. He has a good collection of ancient bronzes, many of them very curious ; particularly a small lamp representing Venus in her car attended by the Graces, and drawn by swans and doves. But perhaps, even while I am writing, it may be no longer in his possession, as the foreigners who throng his cabinet are constantly making purchases,—particularly the English ; and where an object is elegant and

portable as well as antique, it very soon disappears.

As we were about to travel further, we withstood all temptation, and contented ourselves with admiring.

A gold medal was shown to us in admirable preservation, which was found only six days before our arrival ; and a very perfect monument discovered by M. Perrot in a singular manner. He had a *rendez-vous* with a friend, at a village a few leagues distant from Nismes ; where chancing to arrive the first, he jumped off his horse at the stable of a small *auberge*, and leant for awhile on a large stone which served as a door-post. The quality of the stone struck him as not being that of the immediate neighbourhood, and he was induced to examine it more narrowly ; when, on loosening the earth at its base, and passing his hand under it, he traced very distinctly the lines of the sculpture ; and causing it to be raised, he replaced it by

another block of stone, and had it immediately conveyed to his house. The figure chiselled upon its face is very graceful, and although in strong relief is entirely uninjured ; it is that of a Roman Vestal, feeding the sacred fire : the form of the lamp which she holds is extremely elegant ; and her ample garment is very skillfully draped.

On quitting the cabinet of M. Perrot, we took another long look at the "Square House" ere we bent our steps towards the theatre, which suffers considerably from its close neighbourhood to so elaborate a specimen of ancient architecture ; a fact of which the modern builder was so conscious, that he abandoned the more ornamental and laboured Corinthian column, for the chaste and simple Tuscan. Rivalry here would have been insanity !

LETTER XIX.

Cicerones — Baths of Adrian — La Nymphee — The
Roman Basin — The Tour-Magne.

How annoying it is when you are *obliged* to be led about, like a couple of spaniels, by a *garçon de place*, who almost yawns in your face, wearied with his everlasting ciceronianism; and yet how impossible it is to dispense with *his* services, until you have become a little familiar with the *locale*.

Thus we were hurried on from the wonders of the "Square House" to those of the "Baths of Adrian," which are situated on a spot bearing the designation *par excellence* of "the Garden;" and well does it deserve the name, for it is a little provincial paradise.

The baths themselves are very beautiful ; and are built above the remains of those whose name they still bear ; and which were accidentally discovered, in an attempt to render the waters of the mountain-stream, whence they are supplied, more available for the uses of the city. They are assumed to be precisely similar to those they have replaced ; and many portions of the original stone are, indeed, worked into the present building.

The first basin, appropriately named “ La Nymphée,” has in the centre a huge pedestal supporting the statue, with a richly ornamented frieze ; and at each angle a lesser one crowned with an antique vase.

These latter decorations very imperfectly supply the place of the original accessories,—four graceful columns ; one of which we saw in the Museum, reunited to its base and capital, both having been subsequently found. The base is very beautiful, adorned with acanthus-leaves,

bound together with plaited cords : the capital, less elaborately wrought, is nevertheless extremely handsome and in good preservation. Each of these columns is supposed to have supported a Naiad. The ancient bathing-rooms have been carefully retained ; and the modern architect has placed before them a new row of columns, on which rests a projecting cornice.

The water escapes from this basin into a second, commonly called the Roman Basin ; which was the reservoir of the original baths. It is square, and has six arches on each side. Workmen are still employed in directing the course of the stream that now floods the bathing-rooms ; and other improvements are contemplated.

Above the fountain, whose source is shut in by a wall built upon the original foundation, semi-circular flights of stone steps lead up the mountain, to about one-fifth of its height ; whence you continue the ascent by an easy winding path, cut through the dense shrubbery

that clothes its sides, and which is beautifully kept ; until you reach the rocky summit where moulder the remains of the Tour-Magne, or “ Magnificent Tower,” which formed the northern angle of the ancient wall of Nismes.

Its elevated position, has combined with time to accelerate its ruin ; and it is now almost shapeless, though it still retains its air of massive strength : its height is diminished to seventy-eight feet, and it is buried about twelve feet in the earth. Its original elevation is supposed to have been between ninety-five and a hundred feet.

It was, as is now ascertained, used by the Romans as a signal-station, and possessed an interior staircase to its very summit ; the remainder of the tower being a solid block of masonry, without opening of any description ; and from its commanding situation, the light must have been seen at an immense distance. If this conjecture as to its original purpose be

a correct one, modern expediency has gone far to restore it, even in its ruin, to a nearly similar use ; for it is now crowned by a telegraph. Upon the whole, I am Vandal enough to think a visit to the Tour-Magne over-purchased by the fatigue of the ascent. Elsewhere I might have deemed otherwise ; but at Nismes I confess that I grudged alike the time and the exertion.

I am now endeavouring to redeem the one, and to forget the other, in writing to you ; and in assuring you of my unfailing affection.

LETTER XX.

Public Library—Statistical Curiosity—Antiquity of Nismes—The Temple of Diana—Naiades and Goddesses—Cabinet of Natural History.—The Monkey-Fish.

I AM just returned from the public library, where I expected to have found much to interest me, and have been proportionably disappointed. The librarian did the honours very politely, but at once confessed, that to any one who had visited the libraries of Marseilles and Grenoble, that of Nismes could afford no inducement beyond a fine collection of minerals and petrifactions.

The manuscripts are few in number, and of trifling value; and the only thing which attracted me was a local work, giving a brief account

of the city, and the variation of its population since the year 1350. An amusing calculation is made in 1367 of its native nobility, amounting to four chevaliers, seven honourable ladies, and thirteen titled individuals; not one of whom possessed ten net livres of annual revenue; and whose lives are stated to have been a Sysiphus-like struggle between pride and misery.

The census of 1350 computes the number of souls to have been eight hundred; they amount at present to between forty-four and forty-five thousand, without including the suburbs, peopled by three or four thousand more.

Nismes boasts itself the birth-place of the two Aurelius Fulvuses, grandfather and father of Antoninus; and also of Domitius Afer, a celebrated orator, and favourite of Tiberius; and this was all that I learnt at the library!

The "Temple of Diana," also situated in 'the Garden,' is an interesting and curious ruin, though antiquaries differ as to the actual

deity to whom it was consecrated; and have given to it as many names as it has stones left upon each other. A few fragments of the colossal statue which occupied the niched pedestal facing the entrance still remain, but they are insufficient to decide the point.

All around the walls within the temple are heaped the mutilated remains of sculptured cornices, wrought capitals, imperfect inscriptions, and headless columns; while the beauty of those portions of the structure that yet remain, make you grieve over the ruin by which you are surrounded.

The centre niche, as I have before remarked, is tenanted by the statue of the deity; it is the most spacious of the three which occupy the upper end of the temple; those on either side terminating in a hearth, level with the base of the altar in front of the goddess, and having a semi-circular chimney. These were the sacrificial chambers, in which the animals were slain

and burnt, ere they were offered at the shrine of the presiding deity. Beyond these, on either wing of the temple, an open gallery originally ran along the whole length of the edifice, on the north and south sides, which were built of the same ponderous stones that have enabled the structure to resist thus long the destruction of centuries. Many of these stones are nearly eight feet in length, and eighteen inches in thickness; and are united by iron cramps, without any species of cement, which gives to the domed roofs an air of massive strength extremely striking.

One of these galleries still remains nearly entire; of the other the only vestiges that now exist, are piled up within the main body of the temple, also nearly roofless. It is asserted that the entire edifice was paved with mosaic; but it is certain that not a single fragment is now to be discovered; while several of the sixteen columns that supported the cornice on which the roof once rested, remain sufficiently perfect to enable

the visitor to form a tolerable idea of the noble effect of the original design.

Built almost on the borders of the ‘Fountain,’ and under the shadow of a thickly-wooded rock, once within the walls of the city, no situation could have been better chosen than that of this temple; for the clear stream sufficed at once for the ablutions of the priests, and the purification of the laity; while the long cool shadows of the leafy height afforded a resting-place for the way-worn and the weary.

It is not ten paces from the haunt of the Naiad to the Temple of the Goddess; but methinks, had I lived in pagan times, I should have preferred the worship of the sparkling water-nymph, sporting in the clear sunshine between the flower-enamelled banks, to that of the sombre deity pent within four walls, and propitiated with blood!

From the temple we strolled to an establishment dignified with the title of the “Cabinet of

Natural History," which turned out to be a private collection of birds, beasts, and butterflies, very well preserved; and I only mention it in order to tell you that, among other objects, the proprietor pointed out to us, as the greatest curiosity he possessed, the monkey-fish, which you may remember to have heard of in England, and which created a great sensation among the naturalists; until it was discovered to be an ingenious hoax, the work of an American, when it suddenly disappeared.

Of course I made no comment on this very miraculous monster, which we were gravely informed was worth at least eighty thousand francs; though I could not help laughing heartily, after we had left the exhibition, at so very unexpected an encounter in classical Nismes!

LETTER XXI.

Interest of Nîmes as a City—The Man with Four Legs
—The Gate of Augustus—The Porta Cooperta—The
Enthusiast.

I SHALL not attempt to give you a detailed account of all the scattered objects of interest which attract the visitor at Nîmes: here it is a monument—there an inscription just sufficiently effaced to excite the curiosity—on one side a caryatides—on another a basso-relievo. I will but name the most curious; which is beyond all comparison, a whimsical statue in stone, at one corner of a house as you approach the Palace, called by the common people, “the man with four legs.”

This extraordinary production sets all consistency and proportion at defiance. From the waist downwards it represents two female figures

the size of life ; and these are surmounted by a drapery which veils the chest ; dominated in its turn by a male head with a flowing beard.

It is impossible to conceive that an original design has been here carried through ; on the contrary, the whole has the effect of owing its existence to the fantastic extravagance of some eccentric individual ; who, having crowned the inferior portion of a caryatides with the base of a column, to complete the absurdity of his conception, has worked out a monstrous caricature of humanity, by placing a bearded head above the already inconsistent creation of his distempered fancy.

The gate of Augustus, built in the Roman year 786, (sixteen years before the birth of Christ,) is still in wonderful preservation, though it is now buried deeply in the earth ; so much so, that the two exterior arches originally destined to pedestrians, would now barely admit a wheelbarrow. Above these arches are two

niches, which are supposed to have contained the busts of Augustus and Agrippa. The two centre arches, through which passed the war-chariots, the mounted troops, and the various equipages of the city, are surmounted by a bull's head in basso-relievo. The division between these is formed by a small Ionic column resting on a square pedestal; while the inferior arches are enclosed between two pillars of the Corinthian order,—a mixture producing a singular and incongruous effect.

The mouldering inscription may still be traced upon the face of the gate; and it has decided alike its date, and the fact that this was the principal entrance to the city on the great Domitianian way from Rome to Narbonne.

The barrier of Augustus is now that of the Gendarmerie Barrack.

The Porta Cooperta, called by the moderns the "Porte de France," although much less elaborate in its decoration, is infinitely more

elegant in its ruin. Modern buildings now rest against its round towers; the huge stones are falling away from its grand and solitary arch; and it stands in massive and severe beauty, spanning the busy street, like a spectre of the past looking down in majesty on the coil and care of the present.

As I stood gazing upwards upon the time-worn towers, an old man bent with years, and leaning upon a staff, lifted the cotton cap from his grey hairs, and approached me.

"Madame," he said gravely, "you are looking upon a mouldering relic of the glorious days when Nismes was a mighty city; and the Roman Emperors feasted in her palaces, and drove their chariots through her streets. It is a great lesson for one so young as you are. I was born yonder, in the narrow hut which lies beneath the shadow of this ponderous work. As a boy I sported about its walls; as a man I rested from labour in the cool shade that it flings far

along the causeway. I have now lived nearly a century ; and it yet stands even as it stood in my childhood. I have made a fellowship with every stone and with every lichen about it. I know that there are prouder ruins, and mightier edifices in the city ; but this one is dearer to me than all the rest ; and I love to believe that long after I have passed away, and am forgotten, the Porta Cooperta will yet stand to attract the admiration of the reflective and the curious."

This was the address of a peasant, my dear ——; and although in my surprised enthusiasm, I may perchance have heightened it somewhat in the translation, I beg you to believe that I have left the sentiment which pervaded it without a touch.

Was not the old man to the full as interesting as the Roman relic ?

Alas ! Farewell to Nismes : to-morrow we depart in order to prepare for our Eastern expedition.

LETTER XXII.

Return to Belle de Mai—The Château d'If—The Dungeons—Cell of the Iron Mask—Prison-Pictures—Dungeon of Mirabeau—The Council-Chamber—Prison-Cell of Armand Polignac—Theatre—Oubliette—Towers—Condemned Cells—The Boatman.

Belle de Mai.

I WRITE once more from the shores of the Mediterranean ; from the pastoral retreat of Belle de Mai. Our journey from Nismes was as safe and as uneventful as could be desired by the drowsiest of dowagers ; and, consequently, I may say with the knife-grinder :—" Story ! Lord bless you ; I have none to tell, sir." But since our return here, we have spent one interesting morning at the Château d'If.

Despite the season of the year, the sky was blue and bright when we embarked for the rocky islet on which stands the fortress. It was not blowing more than what sailors call a 'fresh breeze,' and the wind was a side-wind, giving promise of assistance homeward as well as outward. In an hour and a half we were under the rock ; and our letter having been duly presented by the sentinel to the sergeant, by the sergeant to the officer on guard, and by the officer on guard to the commandant, we were at length invited to land ; and after climbing some rude steps cut in the living rock, and passing under a covered doorway, we found ourselves on an esplanade, surrounded by the guard-house, the barrack, and the walls of the fortress ; having the castle itself immediately before us.

A second flight of stairs led us to a small platform ; whence, passing under an arched entrance, we reached the court in the centre of the dungeons. The interior door of this gloomy

passage is closed by an iron grating, and just without the grating a strong staple is attached to the wall. Here we were told that criminals, sentenced to death by the cord, were executed; while the other prisoners were compelled to witness the catastrophe from within the court. An iron gallery runs entirely round the enclosure, which is square, and surrounded by dungeons; those on the ground-floor being appropriated as condemned-cells, and those opening upon the terrace as receptacles for state-prisoners.

A very deep well occupies one angle of the court; and immediately above it is the cell of the Iron Mask. Although this mysterious personage was its tenant only during a few weeks, ere he was removed to his dungeon at St. Marguerite's, I nevertheless examined it with much attention. The walls are covered with rough sketches nearly obliterated, which the jailer assured us were all traced by the hand of the Iron Mask himself. Pass over the assertion

without cavil, my dear ——; why should we, by examining into such things too closely, annihilate the little romance that is still left to us in this age of mechanism and railroads?

It is at all events certain, that there was a melancholy interest attached to the rude outlines which had been scratched with bricks and charred wood upon the whitewash of the cell—they were all symbolic of liberty. There were birds soaring in the air,—ships braving the tempest,—wild horses scouring the desert,—and, perhaps dearer still to the heart of the captive, a fair landscape, which was evidently rather a work of memory than a creation of idleness.

There were also traces of more bitter and reckless feeling; but these were evidently the work of a later hand—the productions of some less tutored and enduring nature. Many political epigrams had been partially effaced, but more than one still remained to prove the indomitability of the spirit whence they had emanated.

From this cell we proceeded to that of Mirabeau; and it was not without emotion that I stood in the centre of his narrow prison, and leant upon the rude plank, fixed within the recess of the solitary window, whereon he wrote his celebrated "Lettres à Sophie."

We next entered the Council-Chamber; a vaulted apartment, where iron staples are driven into the stone-work about three feet from the ground, to which the prisoners were formerly attached in a crouching attitude, and thus detained during the whole process of their trial. It is lighted by two grated apertures opening from the domed roof, and one narrow embrasure.

The next cell that we invaded was that of Armand Polignac, implicated in the fabrication of the Infernal Machine in 1804; and we were not a little startled on discovering that the adjoining apartment had been used as a Theatre by the prisoners, who had amused their captivity

by enacting plays within its grim and grated precincts.

Beyond this "mockery of mirth" opens an *Oubliette*, wherein the prisoner could enter only upon his hands and knees ; and whence being impelled onward by the bayonets of the guard, he ultimately fell through a closed funnel upon the jagged rock which forms the foundation of the fortress. All this was gloomy enough ; and I was not sorry to find myself, a few moments later, standing upon the summit of the lower of the towers, with the fine, light, aromatic breeze playing about me.

My visions were, however, soon called back to earth, and earthly horrors ; as our cicerone pointed out the spot upon this narrow space, where, standing against a grey and hoary buttress, supporting a portion of the castellated outer wall, the prisoners condemned to be shot were executed. The fatal bullets might be traced in considerable numbers by deep inden-

tations in the brick-work ; but I was in no mood to pursue so heart-sickening an occupation.

From this tower, we proceeded to visit the condemned cells ; and miserable indeed they were,—without a ray of light, or a breath of air. It appeared almost impossible for human beings to exist in such an atmosphere, even for a few hours ; but we are assured that, such is the tenacity of life, there had been instances of an individual lingering amid their horrors for months.

You may imagine the misery of such incarceration, when I tell you that a gentleman of the party measured two of these cells : the larger one was eleven feet long, six feet across, and five feet six inches in height ; while that within was but seven feet in length, four in breadth, and five feet two inches high. This den was approached through a short gallery, whose wall was perforated at the extreme end by a small window, through which a stout man could with

difficulty thrust his arm ; and even this miserable aperture was cross-barred with iron !

The gallery was the exercise-ground of the condemned tenants of the adjacent dungeons ; and they were permitted singly to traverse this gloomy passage for two hours each day !

From the summit of the principal tower there is a fine view, not only of the city itself, but of a wide extent of picturesque country, and a noble sweep of sea. The new lazaretto, occupying an island close beside the fortress, is a convenient and cheerful-looking building ; and the light-house in the distance forms a prominent and pleasing object.

Altogether, the Château d'If, with its dungeons, its galleries, and above all, its associations, is well worthy of a visit ; but the interest of the morning did not terminate, for me at least, with the polite parting bow of the commandant of the fortress.

Our boatman was a little, withered, weather-

round one, with a narrow platform immediately beneath it. In that tower Philippe Egalité was confined, when he little hoped that his son,"—and as he spoke he half-lifted the woollen cap once more from his head,—“that his son would ever sit on the throne of France.”

“Have you reason to believe,” I inquired, struck by the singular chance which promised to gratify my long-thwarted curiosity; “that the king’s father really was imprisoned in Fort St. John?”

“Madame will admit that I cannot be deceived,” was the answer, “when I tell her that the wife of my brother, who is now a poor widow, living in the *vieille ville*, was his attendant; and, moreover, the very individual who concerted his escape.”

“Drink another glass of wine, and tell us the story;” I exclaimed anxiously. “From you I shall at last, I doubt not, hear the truth.”

The old man willingly obeyed; he drained a

deep draught with great apparent relish, and with a gesture whose grace would have done no dishonour to a courtier ; and then at once plunged into his narrative.

But my paper is exhausted, and you shall have the old man's story in my next.

LETTER XXIII.

The Boatman's Story.

“My brother's wife, as I told you, mesdames,” commenced the grey-headed boatman, “was the attendant of the illustrious prisoner; and often, very often did the tears rush into the eyes of Marianne as she entered *his* cell, and found him leaning against the closely-barred casement, looking longingly upon the world without. These gentlemen, if they *have served*, are well aware how ill the active spirit brooks restraint; and such was that of Philippe Egalité.

“He watched the flight of the sea-gulls, and sighed as he saw them spread their grey wings, and sweep across the waves,—he followed the

swift track of the little skiffs that darted past the tower out into the blue sea beyond,—he listened to the song of the mariner, and the busy hum of the city streets,—and started as the measured tread of the guard on the rampart of his prison called back his thoughts to his own hated thralldom.

“Marianne had a tender heart, and thus she could not witness the silent grief of the lordly captive, without imbibing a portion of his melancholy ; while, woman-like, she betrayed her interest in his sorrows almost as soon as she felt it. It is not difficult to believe that the captive endeavoured to profit by a sympathy as welcome as it was unexpected. He told the simple and warm-hearted Marianne thrilling tales of his unequal fortunes ; and dropped hints of her power to brighten them. The pitying woman desired no better, but of herself she was only too conscious that she could do little ; while she shrank with a terror by no

means extraordinary or uncalled-for, from the risk of involving either herself or others in an adventure which, if discovered, was certain to involve the personal safety of every individual connected with it. His eloquence nevertheless won upon her heart, while his sorrows softened it; and after a long interval of irresolution and timidity, she at length promised to seek counsel of her husband.

“ Jacques was a fisherman, mesdames, a worthy and honest lad; industrious as a spider, and brave as a lion; a French sailor, with a true heart, and a ready hand; somewhat hot-headed withal, as Marianne well knew, and on this very fact she built her hopes of his assistance.

“ You will not doubt that he was startled by the wild scheme of his excited and anxious wife, when she first explained to him her hopes, her projects, and her fears; but he loved his simple-minded Marianne, and he would not chide her;

though he treated her for awhile as a froward and wilful child, and laughed at her earnestness. Day after day, however, the subject was resumed ; and at length he was induced to lay on his oars under the casement of the captive's cell, and to imply an interest in his misfortunes, which aroused the prisoner to yet warmer entreaties and more urgent efforts to excite the active services of Marianne.

“ But I am telling a long story ; ” said the old man, checking himself ; “ and I shall only weary you with many words, when very few will suffice to satisfy you that he did not strive in vain. The dress of Marianne concealed a coil of well-twisted rope, by which the captive was to lower himself from the casement to the little platform, that is now plainly visible on our left-hand ; her hair became the hiding-place of a couple of sharp files, with which the iron bars were to be severed ; and Jacques had pledged himself to be in waiting with his boat

to receive and secrete the fugitive when he descended.

“So far all went well; but the work was yet to do; and as the nights were bright, and the sky flooded with moonlight, the prisoner had ample time to execute the first portion of his task, ere gloom and darkness rendered it safe for him to attempt his escape. Skilfully and secretly he worked, and no suspicion was excited; nor did the heart of the captive himself beat more tumultuously when the eventful midnight at length arrived which was to decide his fate, than those of Jacques and his anxious Marianne. Nature seemed to be a party in the plot; for as the sun set, a thick, dense bank of clouds obscured its parting radiance; and when the darkness gathered over the sea, down came the rain in torrents, borne furiously along by the wild squalls of wind that swept across the port.

“The little boat of Jacques rocked fright-

fully in the gusts, but his heart was firm ; and he knew that his wife, after taking leave of her imprisoned master, and commending him from her spirit-depths to the Virgin and the blessed Saints, would be awaiting him at an appointed spot not far from the shore, to assist him, if need were, in securing the escape of the royal fugitive.

“With this conviction Jacques fearlessly pursued his purpose ; and within a few seconds of the time at which he had promised to be at his post, a shrill whistle, that to any ear but one prepared for such a signal, must have passed for the sweeping of a gust of wind across the battlements, or the cry of a startled sea-bird, brought the prisoner to the narrow window of his dungeon. The bars, already ground away by the file, were hastily and quietly withdrawn ; the rope, made fast to the heavy iron bedstead of the cell, was flung from the casement, and hung almost to the platform, beneath

which the boat rocked and heaved with the heavy sea that dashed itself into foam against the tower ; and soon the practised, and now sharpened eye of Jacques, discovered the form of the prince, as it passed through the narrow aperture with some difficulty, and hung for a moment suspended mid-way between the window and the boat.

“ But the temporary suspense was frightfully terminated ; for the anxious Jacques had not time to utter an *Ave*, ere he saw the prisoner fall heavily on the platform ; while a low groan assured him that some bitter consequence had ensued.

“ Well was it, both for the prince and his deliverer, that a wilder night never heaved up the stormy waves of the Mediterranean ; for thanks to the howling of the wind, and the darkness of the scud that drove over the sky, they continued unobserved ; and Jacques ascertained to his dismay, that the captive, by the

failure of the rope, had broken his leg above the knee, and was writhing with agony.

“No time was to be lost,—nor was it; and although Jacques was unable to the day of his death to explain how the thing was done, it is certain that he contrived by some means to get the wounded man on board the boat; and to row him safely to the spot where Marianne, trembling with anxiety and shivering with cold, stood, eagerly looking for her husband and the fugitive.

“A few words sufficed to tell her all, but Marianne was not easily daunted; and she felt at once that these circumstances only entailed the necessity of additional care and caution. The prince was wrapped up in the wet sails that lay at the bottom of the boat, and carried between the husband and wife to their miserable room, on the ground-floor of a squalid house in the *vieille ville*. There, in a wood-closet, rudely constructed of a few coarse

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planks, and pillowed on a seaman's cloak, was stretched the agonized form of our king's father ; and there, with Jacques for his doctor, and Marianne for his nurse, in darkness and in dread, lay the suffering prince ; while the alarm-guns were booming along the water from the ramparts of the fortress, and the city was overrun by soldiers in pursuit of the fugitive.

“ But he escaped them, mesdames ! ” exclaimed the old man, while his eye lightened up, and the blood gushed over his wrinkled forehead ; “ He escaped them ! and departed from the hovel of my brother, by the assistance of some trusty friends to whom he had made known his retreat. Where he went, I have forgotten ; and perhaps you do not need telling—— And here we are, under the very window ; this is the platform—you see I can almost touch it with my oar ; and I have nothing more to add, except my thanks that you have listened with so much patience to my story.”

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“But how has it chanced, my friend,” I asked, “that you have never been rewarded for so signal a service to a member of the reigning family? You are an old man, and are becoming too feeble for your business. Why do you not petition the king for a pension for your sister-in-law, if not for yourself? Louis Philippe has rewarded, with the greatest liberality, services far less essential than this.”

“We have done it, madame;” was the ready answer; “we have a friend on the Quai, a writer; and he put together a petition of three pages for us, that it would have done the king himself good to read. But alas! nothing came of it.”

“And through what channel was it conveyed?” I inquired, now as much interested in the old man as I had previously been with his story. “Are you sure that it ever reached the Tuilleries?”

“Who can say?” he replied sadly; “Marianne and I dressed ourselves in our best clothes on a fine morning, just after *the Three Days* that put the son of the prisoner of Fort St. John on the French throne; and carried the petition ourselves to the Prefecture, where we found M. le Maire, who looked over it, and promised that when an opportunity offered, he would forward it to Paris; but since that day we have heard no more of it.”

“And never will;” I answered somewhat abruptly. “Why, my good old man, the Marquis de —— was Mayor of Marseilles at that period. I know him well—he is a Carlist, heart and soul; and of course made *alumettes* of your petition.”

“Our Lady’s will be done!” said the boatman quietly. “What can a poor man expect who has no friend to take his part? Take care of your fingers, madame, for I am going to

run the boat close along-side that small brig. Should you go on the water again in the course of the week, will you be so good as to ask for ‘The Two Brothers?’”

And thus it was, my dear ——, that I ascertained the locality of Philippe Egalité’s dungeon.

LETTER XXIV.

Cowardice—A Classic Voyage—Dreams—A Vision in
Verse—A few Last Words.

I WRITE to you from Marseilles, my dear —, for the last time; a mere *billet d'adieu*, ere we embark to-morrow evening in the Austrian brig *Naxaret*, for the City of the Sultan!

I have resolved to scatter my cowardice to the winds—or to bequeath it to a monastery—or, in short, to dispose of it in any way by which I may be rid of its trembling visitations for the next twelve months.

Who can afford to be a coward in the *Ægean* Sea, among the “Isles of Greece,” or on the classic Propontis? Not I, at least——But enough of this *persiflage*. It is in vain that I attempt to cheat either you or myself—my heart is

heavy ; and my spirit sad. I cannot forget, even amid all my enthusiasm, that every hour is widening the distance between me and my home ; that my friends, my mother—even Europe itself will, ere I return, have been merely memories. Were not my father with me, I believe that my resolution would fail me at the eleventh hour.

All the crew of our “ floating prison ” are Italians ; and the captain, as we have been informed, a poet ! Is not this encouraging ?

The whole of last night I dreamt of the Château d’If. I presume that I was indebted to my low spirits for my cheerless visions. Certain it is, that while my sleep lasted, I experienced all the horrors of captivity ; and my mind was so much impressed by the terrors of the night when I rose, that I recorded my sensations, in what the ingenious author of *The Mysteries of Udolpho* was wont to denominate “ a Copy of Verses.”

As Mr. — has kindly offered to take charge of my letter, its bulk will be unimportant ; and you may as well have the benefit of my dulness as a parting bequest from the “ fair citie of Marsilia.” Here it is:—

I lay upon a dungeon floor,
On my damp and scanty bed;
And many a wretch had lain there before,
For the walls were scrawled and scribbled o’er
On high above my head.
There were rude initials, strangely blent,
The pastime of imprisonment ;
There were holy signs of faith and trust,
Sketched with the foul corroding rust
Of some iron instrument;
There were ribald couplets, deeply writ,
Where coarseness marred the effect of wit,
And negatived the intent;
There were outlines, which appeared to trace
The features of some cherished face,
The work of time and care ;
Begun, perhaps, when hope was high,

In the first months of captivity,
But finished in despair!
And all this had been wrought by hands,
Fetter'd, like mine, in iron bands;
The task, perchance, of many years,
Produced mid misery and tears;
The pastime which had tried its pow'r
To cheat pale Sorrow of an hour.

And, still more sad! there was a row
Of notches in the cell,
Which seem'd to have been made to show,
How many days could come and go,
Mid fate so terrible!
Alas! it was a weary line,
At once a symbol and a sign,
To those who followed there:—
Weeks, months, and years were counted o'er,
And set apart, a saddening store
Of anguish and despair!

I tried to guess what hand had wrought
These promptings to soul-maddening thought;
I tried to picture forth the gaze

Of the stern and stedfast eye,
Which numbered there the noted days
Of a dread captivity !
At first each notch was straight and long ;
The captive's nerves were firm and strong ;
Or thus the line could not have gone
So deeply through the jagged stone :
Long wore the marks this trace of force ;
But soon they ceased to be
So firm and even in their course ;
And I almost seemed to see
The throbbings of the unsteady hand,
Which shook within its iron band—
The bounding pulse that beat, and spurned
The fetter beneath which it burned,
And fevered to be free !

This was the first sad change ; but more
Upon the next I wept :
He who once smote even to the core
Of the rude stone, which darkly bore
The record that he kept,
Now left a lighter trace of woe,
As if his strength were waning low.

Faint, and more faintly, every line
Bore proof of manhood's swift decline,
Mid famine, grief, and thrall ;
At last there was *one* notch, so light
It scarcely had been finished quite ;
Life's last sad effort, half in vain,
To follow up the list of pain—
And I could almost feel and see
That Death had set the prisoner free,
Ere he had time for all !

But, saddest still,—full many a trace,
Remained in that unhappy place,
Of the wild madness, which despair
Had wrought upon the brain ;
And which had been eternized there
In agony and pain,—
The madness of demoniac glee,
Vented in curse and blasphemy ;
Dark images of phrenzied mirth,
In the heart's misery pour'd forth :
Clings to base, unholy things,
Unbridled, vain imaginings ;
Murmurs, where prayers had more avail'd,

Curse, where orisons had fail'd,
Blood, where there needed tears ;
And still each base impress remain'd,
By which the rough-hewn walls were stain'd
Of erst, in long passed years.

Others had been less dark of mood
In their ungenial solitude ;
And it was strange to mark how thought
Was with bright gleams of freedom fraught ;
How it had fondly loved to rest
On each unfetter'd thing ;
A ship upon the billow's crest—
A bird upon the wing—
A tall steed riderless and free—
All symbols of that liberty
For which each hour they sighed ;
And it was maddening to know
That they who strove to cheat their woe,
By leaving this mute registry
Of their heart-sickness, thus to me,
Had striven till they died !

* * * *

And now, farewell—dearest and best beloved of friends ! When this reaches you, we shall be far, far from the sunny shores of France—far from my fond mother—far from yourself. My father warns me that my time is limited ; and my letter to my dear and absent parent is still unwritten. I shall conclude my hurried epistle with no flourish of sentiment : where the heart is a party in the regret, words are both idle and insufficient.

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THE
RIVER AND THE DESART.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

HAVING judged it expedient to affix to my personal narrative a brief description of the interior of the Carthusian Monastery, from which I was necessarily excluded, I avail myself of the information of the relative by whom I was accompanied, to satisfy the curiosity of those readers who may have felt an interest in my picture of the surrounding Desart.

The outer gates of the building admit the visitor to a spacious court, containing two dilapidated fountains, whose marble basins are filled from a mountain spring; and beyond this, the doors of the main edifice open upon

a vast and lofty hall, whence diverge three galleries, stretching far away into the distance.

The cells of those brethren who hold official situations in the community, such as the Père Procureur, the Père Coadjutor, &c. open from this corridor; here also are the four noble apartments dedicated to visitors, whence their sleeping-cells branch off on every side. The names of these apartments designate the different periods of their appropriation: they are called the halls of Burgundy, of Aquitaine, of Germany, and of Italy; and serve as refectories and sitting-rooms for the guests. They are simply furnished with wooden benches and long tables; with the exception of the former, which is decorated with a very ill-painted portrait of the Duke of Burgundy, by one of those Flemish artists of whom he was so efficient and so generous a patron. Strangers are allowed to make one common repast, but

are not compelled to do so, being left free to select their own hours and companions.

Towards the centre of the principal dormitory is the gallery which conducts to the Chapter-hall, a fine and vast apartment, elegantly proportioned, and extremely lofty; around which are suspended portraits the size of life, of all the Generals of the Carthusian Order, including St. Bruno himself. They are, however, of very doubtful authority, being evidently the work of one hand, and that certainly not a gifted one. Beneath them, forming a contrast by no means favourable to their crudity of style, and inferiority of colouring, hang some fine copies of the chef-d'œuvres of Lesueur, representing the most striking passages in the life of St. Bruno; of which the originals occupy a distinguished place in the Royal Museum at Paris. They are well hung and ably painted; but many among them have suffered in their transit from Grenoble, whither they

were conveyed during the Revolution. A wooden bench extends along the whole circumference of the hall, destined for the accommodation of the Deputies of the Order during a convocation of the Chapter. The seat of the General is a chair of carved wood, above which formerly hung a superb Christ, painted by Philip de Champagne; but this was one of the treasures which the Museum of Grenoble refused to restore; and there it may still be seen.

The church, or rather chapel, of the monastery is remarkable neither for its architecture nor its ornaments; the nave is narrow and lofty, which is extremely favourable to the voices of the brotherhood; and the altar is of wood painted and gilt, entirely filling the deep bay of the sanctuary,—a poor and inefficient substitute for the original shrine of wrought marble, which was presented to the Desert-chapel by the Carthusian community of Pa-

via ; and is a present spoil of the Grenoble cathedral.

The chapel was formerly lined with carved oak, the work of the brotherhood ; but with the exception of the walls above the altar, the whole has been removed ; and many of the elaborate stalls that originally occupied the nave, and which are remarkable for the elegance and finish of their execution, may now be seen in the different churches of Grenoble. Benches of fir-wood at present suffice to the community ; and the interior nave in which they stand, serving as a choir, and extending two-thirds the length of the chapel, is closed against strangers ; who remain with the lay-brothers, and peasantry employed in the service of the convent, at the extremity of the church, separated from the monks by a screen of carved wood.

A single priest officiates at the altar, and chaunts the mass, to which the choir reply ;

and he is assisted only by one vicegerent, covered with a long mantle of white serge. At the elevation of the Host the whole community fall flat on their faces; and at the termination of the service they depart by the side-doors most contiguous to their individual cells, in silence and with averted eyes; not a sound is heard save the dull footfalls of their sandalled feet, nor does one ever come in contact with another.

The library contains nothing that is rare or curious; but the books are all of value as standard works. They are principally historical, and there are many duplicates; the theology is incomplete; the travels and scientific works few in number; and the whole collection demonstrates at once that the library has been formed of donations from the different monks, who, on entering the convent, endowed it with their worldly possessions. How unlike, if the account given by the librarian may be credited, from the treasures of an earlier period, when the

shelves groaned with rare editions of valuable works and scarce manuscripts, offered by munificent sovereigns, delighted travellers, and pious Catholic visitors.

- Most of these precious volumes were destroyed by the different conflagrations to which the building has been so often a prey ; and after that of 1676, Don Masson, then General of the Order, caused all which were at the Char- treuse of Portes to be brought to the Desart, to replace in some degree those which had been lost. The convent of Portes was one of the most ancient houses of the order, having been founded in Burgundy in 1115, and its private collection was by no means contemptible. But even this precaution failed in its intended purpose, for the Revolution swept away all the biblical riches of the community ; and it is a well-attested fact that they were carried to Grenoble, and *sold by weight*, with the excep-

tion of the comparatively inconsequent number which were rescued by individual exertion.

No gift is now so acceptable to the Order as one of books ; they feel the loss of their library bitterly, and are most anxious to replace it. A few presents, their own contributions, and one or two trifling legacies, have already enabled them to collect nearly four thousand volumes ; but they are not of a description to satisfy the curiosity of the scholar, nor to repay the researches of the antiquary. From the library the visitor passes into the cloisters, a double range of vaulted porticoes stretching around a parallelogram of upwards of 1800 feet in length, and forming two corresponding aisles of extreme gloominess, where the light falls scantily and reluctantly : while the centre of the picture presents the simple cemetery of the convent, with its tall black cross, based on a pedestal of granite, overtopping the silent graves of the brotherhood.

The Generals of the Order are covered, like the rest of the monks, only with the long rank grass which, despite the snows and storms of this inhospitable region, forces its sickly and unsightly verdure on the eye during a few weeks of summer; their sole distinction being a cross of stone, on which is inscribed their names, and the date of their decease; while the other members of the community have a small wooden crucifix planted at their head, which soon perishes, and moulders like the dust beneath it.

That which originally marked the grave of Dom Moissonnier, the ancient Superior of the Chartreuse of the Part-Dieu at Fribourg, who was afterwards General of the Order, was the identical cross carried by him on the 8th of July, 1816, when he returned at the head of the monks whom the Revolution had scattered, to resume possession of the Desert-shrine. Like its fellows, however, it soon yielded to the breath of

the tempest, and is now succeeded by the usual crucifix of stone.

It is a singular fact, that this pious and energetic man only survived his return to the Desert eleven days, as though he had been merely spared to fulfil his mission, ere he was recalled to the bosom of his God.

A part of the great cloisters was the work of a Duke of Burgundy, who thus perpetuated the memory of his piety ; and this is the only remnant of ancient architecture now in existence throughout the building, and by far the most attractive portion of the whole edifice.

Each cell consists of three chambers ; the larger one may be considered as the private oratory of the monk ; while the two smaller apartments, which have a door of communication, serve as a sleeping-room, and a work-place. A few theological volumes, a time-piece, tools consistent with his trade or taste, a fire-place,

and a collection of saintly engravings, affixed to the white-washed walls, constitute the whole furniture of its occupant.

Nothing can be more simple nor more cleanly; and no member of the community, is allowed to occupy additional space; save the General himself; and this privilege is simply conceded to the superior, in order to enable him to transact the weighty business which devolves upon him: but no other luxury is superadded; and he lives and dies, like the rest of the brotherhood, a self-mortifying Father of the Desert.

In the Desarts of the Chartreuse may occasionally be seen a species of black salamander, or lizard; a reptile by no means common, and from its rarity not unworthy of description. It is short and clumsy, and totally devoid of the grace and agility of the more common species of lizard. Its legs are bowed, and it drags its

stomach on the earth. It is about eight inches long from the head to the extremity of the tail ; the body itself measuring five inches. Its skin is black and glossy ; and it is marked on each side of the back with stains of bright yellow, of a long and irregular form, which are also perceptible on its legs ; its eyes are very prominent and round, and of a bright sparkling black, being, however, partially veiled by an inferior lid of a tawny colour, that gives a singular character to the head, which is flat and square, like that of a frog. Its mouth is wide, and cut deeply towards the eyes, and its stomach is of a dull grey. The eye closes like that of a bird ; and the ear has no exterior form, but is extremely quick ; and when the creature is alarmed, it raises itself suddenly on its short and mis-shapen legs, and assumes an attitude of defiance.

I have been thus minute in my description of a reptile which bears a considerable resemblance to the salamander of South America,

(though I was informed that it differed from that creature in some minute particulars,) because these little animals are encountered with repugnance by the peasantry of the country, who talk of them as though (the vegetable Upas being proved a fallacy) they were desirous of creating an ambulating pestilence. Their superstitious dread of the black salamander is so great, that they cannot be prevailed upon to touch it; and they give it credit for poisoning the water through which it passes—an element, be it remarked by the way, that it particularly avoids; they invest its very breath with a pestiferous property; and have ill dreams and fearful forebodings, when the timid and lethargic reptile crosses their path.

If ugliness be dangerous, I know not of a more perilous adventure than a rencontre with the salamander of the Carthusian Desarts; but although we teased the one which we chanced to meet, and impeded its onward progress, we did

not even excite in the frightful and obtuse animal the slightest appearance of irritation ; and certainly escaped all annoyance from its displeasure.

A chronological list of the different Carthusian monasteries existing in Europe at the commencement of the Revolution, with the date of their foundation, and the names of their founders, may not be uninteresting to many of my readers ; and I therefore subjoin it, on the authority of M. E. F. M. Dupré Deloire, a traveller who carried to the Desart-shrine both judgment and imagination ; and whose enthusiasm led him to leave no document unexamined that treated of an Order in which he took no common interest.

FRANCE.

Grande Chartreuse 1084 .. Saint Bruno.
 Chalais 1108 .. Guignes-le-Gras, Dauphin.
 Portes..... 1115 .. Bernard de Varrès.
 Sylve-Bénite..... 1116 .. Frédéric Barberousse.

Meyria	1116 ..	Ponce de la Balme.
Darban	1116 ..	The family of Beldémar.
Montrieux	1117 ..	{ Geoffroi, Hugues, and Falco de Soliers.
Arvières	1132 ..	Amédée III.
Mont Dieu.....	1136 ..	Odon.
Vaucluse	1139 ..	Hugues de Cuiseau.
Val-Saint-Pierre. .	1140 ..	Réginald de Rossoi.
Bouvantes	1144 ..	Guignes IX., Dauphin.
Bonnefoi	1156 ..	{ Guillaume Jourdan, Seigneur d'Aubigny.
Seillon	1168 ..	Humbert de Bangé.
Laverne	1170 ..	Pierre Aguard.
Lugny.....	1170 ..	Gauthier de Bourgogne.
Le Val-Dieu	1170 ..	Rotron.
Bonlieu	1171 ..	{ Thibaud de Montmaur, Gérard, Comte de Mar- viers.
Le Liget	1178 ..	Henry II. King of England.
Apponay	1185 ..	Thibaud.
Silignac	1200 ..	{ Hugues de Coligny. Etienne, Comte de Bourg.
Valbonne	1203 ..	Guillaume de Vamian.
Beleary	1209 ..	Henry III. of England.
Montmerle.....	1210 ..	Innocent III., Pope.
Glandiers	1217 ..	Archambaud.
Port-Saint-Mary..	1219 ..	Guillaume and Raoul.

Val-Saint-Georges	1234 ..	Hugon.
Le Parc	1235 ..	Countess de Fif.
Paris	1257 ..	Saint Louis.
St.-Croix-en-Jarès	1280 ..	Béatrix de la Tour.
Valenciennes	1288 ..	Guillaume d'Avesnes.
Present Chartreuse	1296 ..	Ambrose d'Entremonts.
Abbeville	1300 ..	Guillaume de Montfort.
Saint Omer	1300 ..	Jean de St. Aldegonde.
Val-Profonde. ...	1301 ..	Comtesse de Joigny.
Noyon..	1308 ..	Réginald de Roucy.
Bon-Pas	1318 ..	Jean XXII., Pope.
Gosnay } Men ...	1320 ..	{ Théodoric d' Hérisson, Matilda, Countess of Burgundy.
} Women	1329 ..	
Montreuil	1324 ..	Robert.
Bourg-Fontaine..	1325 ..	Comte de Valois.
Troyes	1326 ..	{ Pierre de Marsi. Jean de Surare.
Cahors	1328 ..	Jean XXII., Pope.
Basse-Ville	1328 ..	Jean Grandis.
Vauclair	1330 ..	Archambaud and Bernard.
Molsheim	1340 ..	Unknown.
Villeneuve	1356 ..	Pope Innocent VI.
Castres	1359 ..	Raymond.
Dijon	1383 ..	Philip the Bold.
Pierre-Châtel	1383 ..	Amédée VI.
Rouen	1384 ..	Guillaume de l'Etang.

Nantes.. .. .	1446 ..	Francis I.
Villefranche en }	1450 ..	Unknown.
Rouerque .. }		
Réthel.....	1477	Unknown.
Auray	1480 ..	Francis II.
Gaillon	1571 ..	Cardinal de Bourbon.
Lyons	1585 ..	Henri III.
Toulouse.	1602 ..	The Chartreux of Castres.
Bordeaux	1609 ..	Ambroise Descoubleaux.
Nancy.....	1612 ..	Charles IV. of Lorraine.
Lille.....	1618 ..	Jean Levasseur.
Orléans.	1621 ..	Louis XIII.
Moulins	1625 ..	Henri de Bourbon.
Le Puy	1628 ..	Bishop and Chapter of Puy.
Aix	1633 ..	Jean-André Ainard.
Marseilles.	1633 ..	Chartreux of Villeneuve.
Douai.	1657 ..	Marie Loys.

SAVOY.

Le Reposoir..	1151	Aillon	1178
Pommiers ..	1170	Rissaille ...	1622
Saint-Hugon	1172		

PIEDMONT.

Casote	1171	Turin....	1642, founded
Val-de-Paez..	1173	by Christina	of France.
Asti	1387		

GENOA.

Genoa 1297	Savone 1480
Alberga... 1315	

TUSCANY.

Lucca 1338	Pisa 1367
Florence .. 1342	

NAPLES.

La Tour 1090, founded by Roger, Count of Calabria.	Naples .. 1327, Charles, Duke of Calabria.
Lapadule 1304	Capri..... 1371
	Clermont .. 1395

PAPAL STATES.

Trisulto... 1208	Rome 1370, founded by Nicholas des Ursins.
Bologna .. 1334	Ferrara..... 1454

VENICE.

Montelli 1349	Venice..... 1422
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GERMANY.

Cologne.	Astheim.
Trèves.	Illembach.
Ratisbonne.	Grunnau.
Wurtzburg.	Dulmen.
Teuschlauzen.	Duxi.

POLAND.

Dantzik.		Boréze.
Gelde.		

LOW COUNTRIES.

Leige.		Dietz.
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SWITZERLAND.

Itlengen.		La-Part-Dieu, 1306.
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PORTUGAL.

Lisbon.		Eborra.
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SPAIN.

Scala Dei.		Paular.
Montallegro.		Arriago.
Aula Dei.		Miraflores.
De Fontibus.		Seville.
Conception.		Xeres.
Ara Christi.		Cavalla.
Porta Cœli.		Grenada.
Val Christi.		Majorca.

Among the Carthusian Manuscripts still preserved in the library of Grenoble, is the original donation of the Carthusian Desert to Saint Bruno and his followers, by Humbert de

Mirabel, his brother Odon, and the other proprietors of the wilderness; which was executed with all proper form, and publicly read in the synod of Grenoble, in order to insure its authenticity.

Although too lengthy to insert in a letter, I was aware that it would be acceptable to my correspondent, from the admirable glimpse which it affords of the manners and feeling of the times; and from its having proved so, I have no hesitation in publishing it here. It is the best and earliest title of the *Chartreux* to those desert-fastnesses of which they have been lately almost entirely despoiled, despite the anathema which it evokes on all who would divert the gift from its destined owners.

The same volume contains fifteen other title-deeds, but none of them of equal interest; though they tend to prove that the landed possessions of the Order must, in its palmy days, have been most valuable and extensive.

The original donation of Humbert de Mirabel and his friends, bears date in 1084, and is as follows:—

“ In gratiâ sanctæ et individuæ Trinitatis, misericorditer nostræ salutis ammoniti, recordati sumus humanæ statum conditionis, et vitæ fragilis lapsus inevitabiles, quam sine termine ducimus in peccatis. Bonum itaque judicavimus, nos peccati servos, de manu mortis redimere: temporalia pro cœlestibus mutare; æternam hæreditatem prætio perituræ possessionis comparare. Ne duplici contritione conteramur, et præsentis vitæ miserias, laborum, et delorum initium sumamus. Itaque magistro Brunoni, et iis qui cum eo venerunt fratribus, ut Deo vacarent, ad inhabitandum solitudinem quærentibus, ipsis eorumque successoribus, in æternam possessionem spaciosam heremum concessimus, ego Humbertus de Mirabel, unâ cum Odone, fratri meo, et cæteris qui juris aliquid habebant in

prædicto loco. Ii verò sunt Hugo de Julione, Anselmus Garcinus, deindè Lucia, et filii ejus Rostagnus, Wigo, Ancelmus, Pontius atque Bosc, præcibus et interventer prædictæ matris eorum. Bernardus quoque, Longobardus cum filiis suis, similiter et dominus abbas Siguinus de casâ Dei, cum suorum fratrum conventu, quidquid ibi juris habere videbantur supradictis concesserunt fratribus. Ipsa verò quam eis dedimus heremus hos habet ab oriente terminos: locum qui vocatur Clusa, et rupem claudentem vallem, et pertingentem usque ad molarem, claudentem et dividentem combam caldam, et pervenientem usque ad rupem mediam quæ est super Botgesos. Deindè molarem qui ascendendo protenditur usque ad rupem bovinam: exindè molarem alium qui descendendo producit per crepidinem Platanei, et bovinam usque ad rupem quæ est suprâ furnum de la Follie. Similiter ab illo monte qui de hâc rupe porrigitur usque ad

montem Aillinart, et à monte Aillinart descendendo extenditur juxtà montem contrà occidentem, usque ad rupem quæ est suprà Carriam, et hab hâc rupe porrigitur usque ad rupem de Pertuso: postremò descendendo protenditur usque ad flumen quod vocatur Guierus mortuus: indè quoque ab eodem Clauditur usque ad Clusam.

“ Si quæ verò persona, potens vel impotens, hanc donationem infregerit, tanquàm sacrilegii reo, ab omnipotentis Dei gratiâ et fidelium consortio separata, anathemate maranathâ feriat: æterni ignis incendio, nisi digno latifundii, cum Dathan et Abyron, et Judâ traditore concremanda.

“ Præfata quidem heremus, his terminationibus conclusa, à magistro Brunone, et ab iis qui cum eo erant fratribus, cæpit inhabitari ac construi, anno ab incarnatione Domini millesimo octogesimo quarto, episcopatûs verò domini Hugonis, Gratianopolitani episcopi,

quarto, qui videlicet laudat et corroborat hoc donum quod fecerunt supradictæ personnae, cum omni conventu clericorum suorum, et quantum ad se pertinet quidquid sui juris esse videtur omninô concedit.

“ Testes, Wugo Decanus, Lothar de Podio et Rostagnus, Wugo Delans, et Goltherius Colnesius, Ricardus et Fulcharius, Odo et Odolricus, Petrus et Sylvius, Humbertus et Goltherius Bucca, Petrus et Gibertus, Adalbertus et Adaleus, Petrus et Accardus.

“ Lecta est autem hæc charta Gratianopoli, in ecclesiâ beatæ et gloriosæ semperque Virginis Mariæ quartâ feriâ secundæ hebdomadis dominici adventûs. In præsentia prædicti domini Hugonis, Gratianopolitani episcopi, atque canonicorum suorum, aliorumque multorum, tam sacerdotum quàm cæterorum ordinum clericorum, celebrantium secundum synodum, quinto idus Decembris.”

NOTE ON MARSEILLES.

There are few cities in France which can boast of having produced so many men of eminence as Marseilles ; and it may not be altogether uninteresting to mention the most celebrated among them, commencing with that heaven-born genius, Puget the sculptor. Doubtless Tradition, with her thousand fables, would enable us to mount much higher up the stream of time, and not fail to present us on our voyage with a score of names linked to “ high deservings ;” poets, whose lays have perished with their lives ; heroes, whose tombs have mouldered into unrecorded dust ; and minstrels, whose voices are now mute as the harps they were wont to awaken into melody : but we will content ourselves with the corner-stone of fame which we have already laid, and commence our task with Pierre Puget ; whose name is dear, not only to every Marseillaise, but to every

Frenchman ; and having so done out of respect for his surpassing genius, we will give a list of her departed worthies, ere we mention the existing celebrities of which she has at the present day so much reason to be proud.

Adanson and Lamanon, celebrated naturalists, of whom the latter was massacred by the savages in the expedition of Lapeyrouse : Bouche, the geographer ; Brueys, the dramatist ; Camprat, the composer ; Barthélemy, the author of " Anacharsis ;" Craponne, the great engineer ; Carvin, adjutant-general under the Empire, who was killed at the battle of Bologno in 1800 ; the Count de Fourbin, admiral of the fleet, whose valour is of equal record ; Pierre d'Hozier, sieur de la garde and Champion of France, one of the most celebrated of genealogists, whose discoveries in heraldry are said to have surpassed those of any other individual, either of his own or more recent times ; Honoré d'Urfé, the author of " Astrée," a work which for a period of sixty

years formed a topic of conversation in all enlightened society, afforded plots and situations for dramatists, subjects for painters, and a theme for literary discussion. Pélisson, no mean authority, declared d'Urfé to be "one of the most vast and marvellous spirits that France had ever produced ;" and Lafontaine professed the highest esteem for him, both as a man and an author. Next on the list stands Dumarsais, an able grammarian, whose works are the best vouchers for his value ; Mascaron, the celebrated preacher ; Masillon, whose name is familiar to the whole of Europe, as the eloquent champion of Christianity ; Mirabeau, the translator of Tasso, and author of the "Lettres à Sophie ;" Marshal du Mey ; Nostradamus, a famous doctor and astrologer of the sixteenth century ; Pétronus, a Latin writer, principally known as the author of a powerful satire on the lives of the Emperors ; Peyssonnel, the author of a well-digested work on the East ; Admiral Suffren, who has

the credit of having been the terror of the English in India ; Tournefort, the great botanist ; Vanloo, the celebrated painter ; and Vauvenargues, the philosopher.

Passing to our own times, Marseilles still wears her garland gracefully, and numbers among the sons of her soil, who have earned a proud name alike for her and for themselves ; D'Azincourt, the comedian ; Antonelle, a distinguished member of the Convention ; Barthélemy, the author of "*Némésis*," one of the most popular poets of modern France ; and his friend Mèry ; Brugières de Sorsum, who has unhappily fulfilled the adage, that "whom the gods love, die young," having been early carried off by death from a literary career which promised to be of unusual excellence ; Barbaroux, one of the most striking orators of the Gironde ; Cabasse, author of a series of historical essays on the Parliament of Provence ; Champein, composer of "*La Melomanie*," and several

other agreeable operas ; Della Maria, composer of the " Prisoner," who died by poison in the very bloom of life ; Chardigny, a clever sculptor, several of whose works ornament the city, the most graceful among them being perhaps the statue of St. Roch, above the portal of the Health-Office ; Constantin, the landscape-painter ; and his no less talented son, the first artist on porcelain in the kingdom ; Daumier, the glazier-poet ; Emeric-David, a distinguished *savant* of the academy ; Esménard, author of a poem on navigation, which provoked criticisms as pungent as the praises it elicited were enthusiastic ; Eyriès, a distinguished traveller ; Fau-
ris de Saint-Vincent, the numismatist ; Fourbin, Dagnan, and Tauneur (the rival of Gudin and Isabey) all talented artists ; Garcin de Tassy, the orientalist ; General Gardanne, ambassador in Persia ; Jaubert, the traveller, who first introduced into France the Cashmerian goat ; Lantier, author of the " Voyage d'Antenor ;" Amé-

dée Pichot, well known as the translator of Byron, and the historian of Charles Edward the Pretender; Alphonse Rabbe, author of a work on Russia, full of *verve* and logic; Thiers, at once historian, orator, minister, and *homme de lettres*, whose reputation will be lasting as the records of his country; Topino-Lebrun, a young painter, who was the pupil of David, and executed for a conspiracy against Napoleon during the Consulate; and, though last, not least in the bright galaxy, the two Demoiselles Clari, daughters of a wealthy merchant of the city; one of whom, (Julie, wife to Joseph Napoleon,) has been Queen of Spain; while the other, (Eugenie-Bernardine Désirée, married to Bernadotte,) is still the sovereign of Norway and Sweden!

Many other distinguished names might have been added to the list; and among them several that have done good service to the cause of literature, a fact which renders the stagnation of letters in Marseilles the more extraordinary; and

I cannot give a better idea of the anti-literary tastes of the people, than by quoting the facetious description of a modern local writer :—

“ At Paris, in London, at Vienna, at Berlin, at Florence, the librarians purchase books.

“ At Lyons, at Bordeaux, at Brussels, at Rouen, at Geneva, the librarians sell books.

“ At Marseilles, the librarians let out books on hire.”

And this, *malgré* its tone of *persiflage*, is precisely the case. Despite the fact that Marseilles has given birth to several eminent men, who assuredly have afforded her good cause, commercial though she be, to assume some literary consequence, no modern work of value can be procured on the instant; and even at the library of M. Camoin, the principal bookseller of the city, you have sometimes to wait for months ere the number of orders received renders it worth while for him to encounter the expense of a package from Paris !

Nearly all the popular and patronised literature of Marseilles consists of second-rate romances, and the eight local news-sheets.

In 1819 there was but one paper published in the city, entirely consisting of commercial intelligence and advertisements; in the present year there are four purely political gazettes. The "Garde National" is in the ministerial interest; the "Gazette du Midi" is a Carlist print, and an echo of the "Gazette de France;" the "Sémaphore," and the "Mistral," are the Liberal organs; while the "Feuille de Commerce," the "Journal de Jurisprudence," and the "Commissionnaire," are sufficiently defined by their titles; and the nature of the existing newspapers of Marseilles is not calculated to make their readers remember without regret the extinction of the "Phocéan;" a journal which was established in 1820, under the able editorship of Rabbe and Méry, but suppressed by the government ere it had existed for twelve months.

A course of literary and scientific lectures are delivered every winter at the "Athenæum," a club which possessed a magnificent library, and subscribes to all the metropolitan journals ; while the "Cercle des Arts" has its walls covered with drawings, paintings, and sketches by local artists : and this is all that can at present be said for the arts and literature of the birth-place of Puget, Thiers, and Barthélemy !

THE END.

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The fair, the elegant, and fascinating MISS JENNINGS, "who robbed the men of their hearts, the women of their lovers, and never lost herself."

The DUCHESS OF PORTSMOUTH, one of the most absolute of Royal favourites.

The COUNTESS OF NORTHUMBERLAND, distinguished for her uncommon grace and beauty, and the blameless tenor of her life.

And the DUCHESS OF DEVONSHIRE, fair, kind, and true, and wedded to a Nobleman, who, to the valour and bearing of a Paladin of old Romance, added the spirit of an ancient Roman.

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